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ABSTRACT

This textbook for high school, college, or adult readers covers major areas of Navajo history from prehistoric times to 1846 from the Navajo point of view. A brief description of pre-Navajo cultures including the Hohokam, Mogollon, and Anasazi precedes the more detailed history of the arrival of the Navajo and contact with the Pueblo peoples. History of contact with the Spanish, the missionary period, and Mexican rule is detailed and descriptions of economic, social, and cultural, aspects of the Navajo are included. The text concludes with the takeover of the Province of New Mexico by American troops in 1846. Footnotes and 31 black and white drawings, photographs, and maps amplify the text. An 86-item bibliography of books and articles and a subject index are appended. (LFL)

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NAVAJO HISTORY TO 1846

The Land and the People

BILL P. ACREY

Department of Curriculum Materials Development
Central Consolidated School District No. 22
Shiprock, New Mexico

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DEDICATION

This book is respectfully dedicated to Roseleen Raymond-Tsosie, former Director of Federal Programs, Central Consolidated School District No. 22, for her interest and guidance in providing culturally oriented materials for Navajo students.

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FOREWORD

The United States of America is blessed with having many different groups of people, each with their own cultural origins and traditions. As citizens, these groups have been made familiar with the history of the United States through the American education system.

Until recently however, little space was devoted in American history textbooks to the study of these various cultural groups. This was particularly true of the American Indian. The large number of different Indian tribes found within the United States makes it impossible for current American history textbooks to cover more than a general history of the American Indian.

The need for specific materials relating to the history of the Navajo Indian people has led to the writing of this Navajo history textbook, which deals with the period of Navajo history from prehistoric times to 1846.

Chapter 1

THE DAWN OF NAVAJO HISTORY

The modern Navajo Reservation sprawls across 24,000 square miles of desert, mountains, broad valleys, mesas and canyonlands in northwestern New Mexico, northeastern Arizona and southeastern Utah. This vast and seemingly endless area comprises the homeland of the largest Indian tribe in America, the Navajo.

Today, the Navajo Indian people represent a cross section of cultural values and traits which range from that of the modern American world to that which is basically accepted as the traditional Navajo way of life. Somewhere in between these two points can be found the life-style of the majority of the Navajo people, a people who have left a deep imprint on the past and who continue to make an even deeper cultural, political and economic impact upon the present.

Who are these people who have played such an important role in the colorful and turbulent history of the American Southwest? These people who are widely known for their weaving skills, beautiful turquoise jewelry, wondrous legends, chants and ceremonies. Who are these people, known as the Dine', whose flocks and herds graze across a reservation which contains great mineral wealth and is a constant interaction of the modern and traditional ways of life? A people who have accepted cultural changes throughout their long history and blended these changes into their own unique life-style while at the same time making marked contributions to the other cultures of the Southwest.

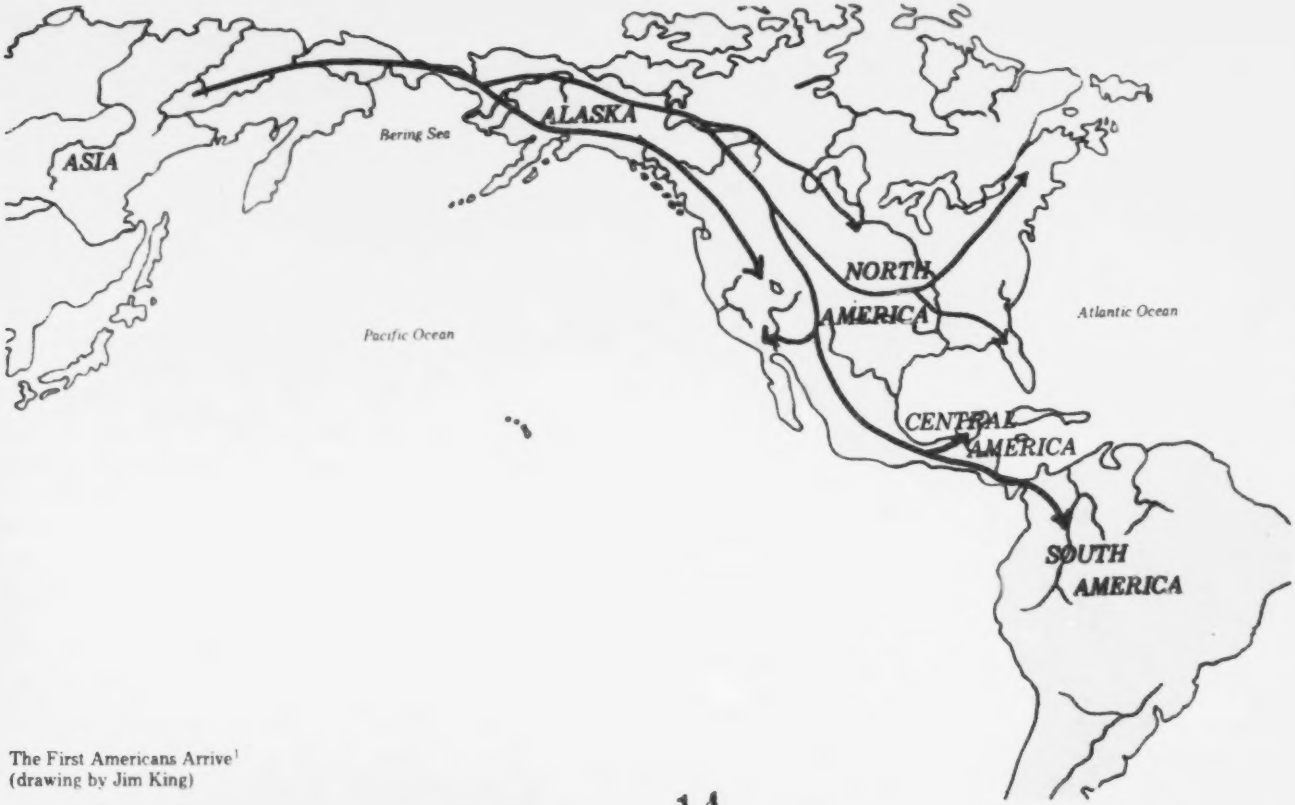
The answers to these questions can be found only in the long and interesting history of the Dine'. A history beginning in the haze of prehistoric times and extending across several centuries of cultural contacts with both Indian and non-Indian peoples of the Southwest.

The history of the Navajo Indian people begins in the misty period of prehistory. Then slowly, like the sun on a foggy morning, becomes clearer and clearer until it enters the period of recorded history and begins to brightly focus on the Dine' and their part in the pageant of Southwestern history.

To trace the history of the Navajo people, it is necessary to go back to prehistoric times before written records were kept. Back to that time which historians believe was the origin of the migrations of ancient peoples from Asia to the New World. There in the continuous migrations of early man to the New World can be found the threads of Navajo history as they begin to be woven into a distinct pattern which eventually became a part of the broader history of America and its people.

Ancient Migrations to the New World and Early Man

Although much controversy has arisen concerning the different theories put forth to explain the appearance and dates of early man on the American continent, the most universally accepted theory is that early man migrated, over a period of thousands of years, across the Bering Strait on a land bridge which once connected Asia to the New World. This land bridge was the result of the Pleistocene epoch, or Ice Age as it is more commonly called, which lasted for approximately one and a half million years. During the Pleistocene epoch, the earth experienced four major periods of extremely cold weather which caused the polar ice cap, a permanent ice sheet near the North Pole, to slowly move southward where it met with large glaciers of ice and snow that formed in the mountain ranges. Each of these four glacial periods lasted from 10,000 to 50,000 years.



The First Americans Arrive[1]
(drawing by Jim King)

During these periods of glaciation, ice sheets may have piled up as much as a mile thick over New England and thousands of feet deep in the northern part of the Mississippi Valley. Four times these massive ice sheets advanced and retreated across much of the northern part of the world. In periods of cold weather, while the ice sheets were forming and beginning to spread, animals in both the Old and New Worlds were forced to slowly drift southward, seeking warmer climates and vegetation.

In the Old World, when the animals moved southward, so did man who was dependent upon them for his major source of food. When the glaciers retreated, the animals, followed by man, again moved northward.

Between 70,000 and 150,000 years ago, during the fourth or "Wisconsin" glaciation as it is called in America, man is believed to have eventually followed the migrating animals across the land bridge from the Old World to the New. This land bridge connecting Asia to the present-day region of Alaska and Western Canada appeared and disappeared throughout the Pleistocene epoch, being created, destroyed or varying in size as the result of the intricate design of nature.

As the world's climate became colder prior to the beginning of each of the ice ages, the evaporating moisture from the ocean was turned into ice and snow. Over a period of several thousand years, the moisture from the oceans was slowly locked into the great glaciers which slowly moved southward, toppling forests and gouging out great areas of the earth's surface. As the glaciers formed, the ocean, deprived of water which normally came from land surface run-off, may have receeded as much as 150 to 300 feet thus revealing the land bridge.[2] As the climate warmed, the water run-off from the melting ice sheets flowed back into the ocean. As the ocean level rose, the land bridge was either completely covered or greatly reduced in size. "Thus the land bridge endured off and on for some tens of thousands of years, until a sudden rise in temperature around 10,000 years ago began to pour water back into the ocean and the bridge, after several centuries, was covered completely."[3]

While the land bridge was in existence, an ice free corridor from the Old World to the New was created by a strange quirk of nature. The warmth of the Pacific Ocean and the mass of the land bridge, which blocked off the cold waters of the Arctic Ocean, allowed vegetation to grow on the bridge. This vegetation provided an excellent grazing area for the migrating animals. As the animals

migrated to the bridge area in search of food, so did man. Thus the ageless cycle of survival for both the hunter and the hunted continued through countless generations as man followed the slowly migrating animals across the land bridge and onto the American Continent.

Ice Age hunters hunting animals.
(oil painting by O. C. Joe)

No one knows when the first hunters crossed the Bering Land Bridge, but scholars agree that the ancestors of the American Indians of today may have started their migrations to America from Asia as long ago as 50,000 years ago with the earliest unanimously accepted evidence for the presence of man in North America, outside of Alaska, being about 12,000 to 13,000 years ago.[4]

Early man did not migrate across the Bering land bridge in one single large migration, nor did he come in one continuous flow of people from Asia. Evidence points instead to a series of waves of people on the march, forced northward in Asia and then across the land bridge by radical changes in climate. Once across

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the connecting strip of land, they undoubtedly followed an ice free route southward, slowly migrating generation after generation toward warmer climates and more plentiful food supplies. Later groups, finding some areas already inhabited by earlier groups, moved on, looking for a favorable place to settle. Some moved into the eastern and central areas of North America. Others drifted farther south, through Mexico and Central America and across the narrow land bridge of the Isthmus of Panama and on into South America. Evidence has been found indicating that man reached the tip of South America at the Strait of Magellan at least 10,000 years ago. Thus by 500 B.C., following a process of migrations which occurred over a period of thousands of years, the Western Hemisphere, from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego on the tip of South America, was inhabited.

Archaeologists, those social scientists who study the physical remains of mankind's past, have made several important discoveries about early man's inhabitation of North America. Several of these discoveries have been made in the Southwestern region of the United States where the dry climate has helped to preserve a sometimes meager assortment of artifacts which act as clues to early man's existence in the area.

Although archaeologists cannot reconstruct a complete cultural picture for all the physical remains of early man which are unearthed, they can tell us many things about them as well as make hypotheses about dates in prehistoric times. They do so by studying three kinds of remains: (1) the bones of early man, from which they can reconstruct his size and appearance; (2) the bones of animals found near him, which tell what animals he hunted and the hunting methods he used and (3) artifacts, those tools, weapons and utensils found with him.

Much of the success involved in piecing together the physical clues of early prehistoric cultures and especially the placing of these cultures into time periods has been due to the accidental discovery, in the 1940's, of a process known as Radiocarbon Dating. This process is based upon the fact that radioactive carbon, or C14 as it is more commonly called, is present in all living things and after the death of an organism, whether man, fish or tree, this radioactive carbon decomposes at a known rate. By measuring the existing amount of radioactive carbon still remaining (if any) in the item being tested, an approximate date can be established.

This C14 method has been used to definitely date the existence

of man in the New World at about 12,000 to 13,000 years ago. However, the discovery of what is believed to be crude, prehistoric pre-projectile tools, such as choppers and scrapers, has led many scholars to theorize that man may have inhabited parts of North America as long as 20,000 to 40,000 years ago.[5]

Early Southwestern Indian Cultures

No one knows and no general agreement now exists as to when man first entered the Southwestern region of the United States. Archaeological discoveries of Sandia, Clovis and Folsom types (spear points) which range in age from ca. 10,000 to perhaps 20,000 years ago have been discovered at Sandia, New Mexico and at Lehner, Naco and Ventana Cave sites in southern Arizona.

Also, plentiful hunting sites with numerous artifacts and mammoth bones have been discovered in the plains areas eastward from New Mexico. This indicates that these areas were better for hunting than those of the Southwest where only limited artifacts have been found. The Southwestern areas were probably used infrequently by small groups of hunters who wandered there from the eastern plains areas.

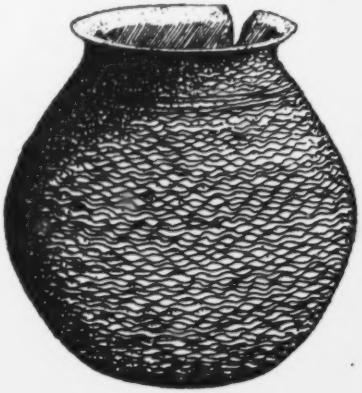
By ca. 9,000 years ago, the Ice Age animals were disappearing in the Southwest and the peoples of this area began to change their economic dependence toward that of the Desert Culture which consisted of trapping and hunting small game and gathering wild plant foods rather than hunting large animals. These Desert Culture peoples collected such wild foods as grass seeds, mesquite beans, piñon nuts, yucca fruits and various berries. They also trapped or hunted small animals such as rodents, reptiles, birds and, depending on location, certain insects. They probably traveled in small bands of related families and roamed within limited areas. They found shelter in caves and rock overhangs and used rabbit fur, vegetable fibers and animal hides for blankets and articles of clothing. These early food gatherers fashioned such utensils and implements as milling stones and atlatls (throwing sticks) out of chipped stone, wood and bone. Until the latter part of their culture, they existed without farming, permanent dwellings or pottery.

The Cochise Tradition Culture

By 5,000 B.C. one Desert Culture group known as the Cochise Tradition People were well established in the central and southern areas of the Southwest where they passed through three distinctive stages of development. Settlement into permanent dwellings in the form of village life came to the Cochise People and later Desert Cultures only after an assured food supply existed and farming developed.

This assured food supply appears to have been introduced into the Southwest from Mexico ca. 4,500 B.C. in the form of maize or Indian corn, with bean cultivation also coming from Mexico about 3,000 B.C.. Neither the corn nor beans appear to have had much impact on the life-styles of the different groups of Southwestern peoples until ca. 500 B.C. At this time a new strain of corn, possibly more drought resistant, began to gain a foothold in the southern mountain border between present-day New Mexico and Arizona. From this area, the use of cultivated beans and corn gradually spread to other parts of the Southwest.

By ca. 300 B.C. the Cochise Peoples, now in their latter stage of development, began to make extensive use of both beans and squash cultivation. Because these new crops provided the assured food supply necessary for village life, the Cochise Culture began to establish permanent and semipermanent villages. As permanent dwellings and the use of pottery, which is too breakable for use by wandering hunting groups, tend to go together, by ca. 200 B.C. pottery was in common use in the Cochise villages.



Pottery sample from the Cochise Culture. (drawing by O. C. Joe)

"It has been assumed that pottery making, or at least the general principle of pottery making, was introduced into this southern desert and mountain portion of the Southwest from Mexico."[6]

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The Mogollon-Mimbres Culture

Out of the Cochise Culture, the new traits of permanent dwellings, storage pits for food crops, and pottery, came three later Pueblo Desert Cultures which archaeologists now recognize as the Mogollon-Mimbres, the Hohokam and the Anasazi.

Apparently the earliest, the Mogollon-Mimbres, emerged in the old Cochise locality of northern Sonora and Chihuahua in Mexico and in southeastern Arizona between A.D. 300 and 500. The earliest Mogollon Culture shows definite relationships back to the Cochise Culture and by the time of Christ, Mogollon Culture was well established and was a vigorous cultural group.

By A.D. 300, this culture was still developing and was beginning to strongly influence other areas surrounding it.[7] This culture at first used pit houses, but by A.D. 1000 they had developed pueblo style houses on top of the ground and were using kivas as ceremonial centers and meeting places for male members of the tribe.

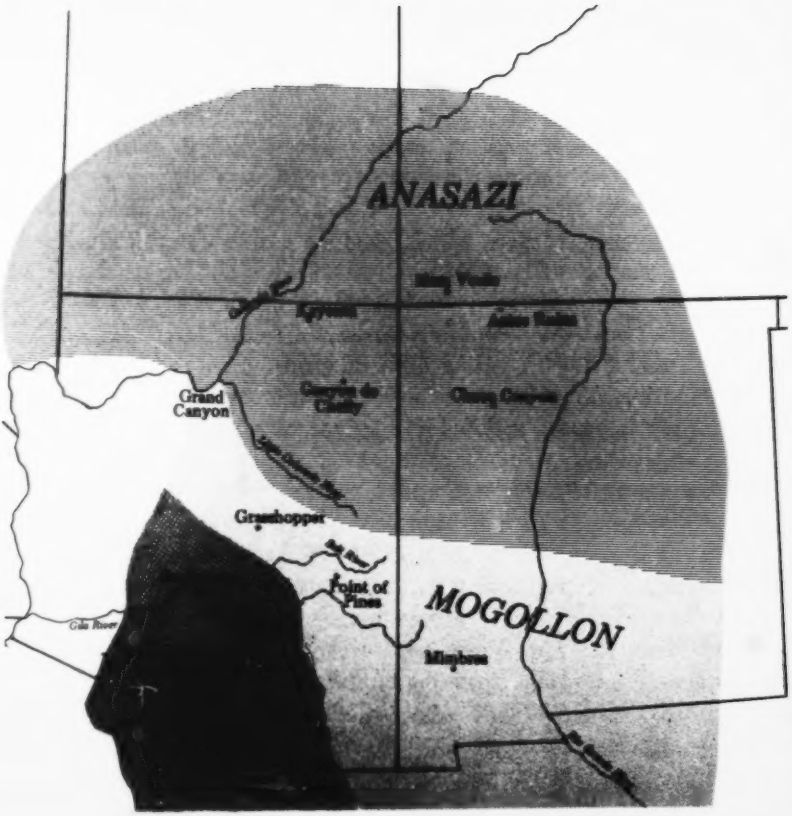
Around A.D. 1250-1300, the Mogollon Culture had achieved a high degree of perfection in their pottery making. This pottery from the Mogollon - Mimbres period was black on white with perfect designs. The Mogollon Culture also used such utensils as stone bowls, grinding stones, hammerstones, stone axes and hoes, arrowheads, spears, knives and drills. The cultivation of corn as well as hunting and wild food gathering provided the basic food supply for this highly organized and social culture.[8]

The Hohokam Culture

West of the Mogollon peoples in central and southern Arizona was the neighboring culture now known as the Hohokam. According to Perrigo in *Our Spanish Southwest*, the name Hohokam was derived from a Yuman Indian word, Hakataya, meaning "Colorado River."

The Hohokam Culture is thought to have been closely related to the Mogollon Culture to the east,with both groups being descendants of the earlier Cochise peoples.

The way of life for the Hohokams before the year A.D. 1, is believed to have many similiar characteristics with that of the Mogollon Culture, with both having a basic dependence upon corn cultivation and both making great strides in the development of the



Hohokam, Mogollon & Anasazi Cultures[8]
(drawing by Jim King)

arts. However, by A.D. 300, each were living different ways of life.

By the 14th century, the Hohokams were joined by a group of people from central Arizona known as the Salados. Together, the Hohokams and the Salados began to achieve an outstanding culture and passed through several stages of development which saw the constructing of the great Casa Grande Pueblo near modern day Casa Grande, Arizona. The joint Hohokams-Salado Culture also developed an extensive and sophisticated irrigation system.

This culture was highly organized with both flourishing art forms and an established religious system, possibly influenced by Indian groups from what is today northern Mexico.

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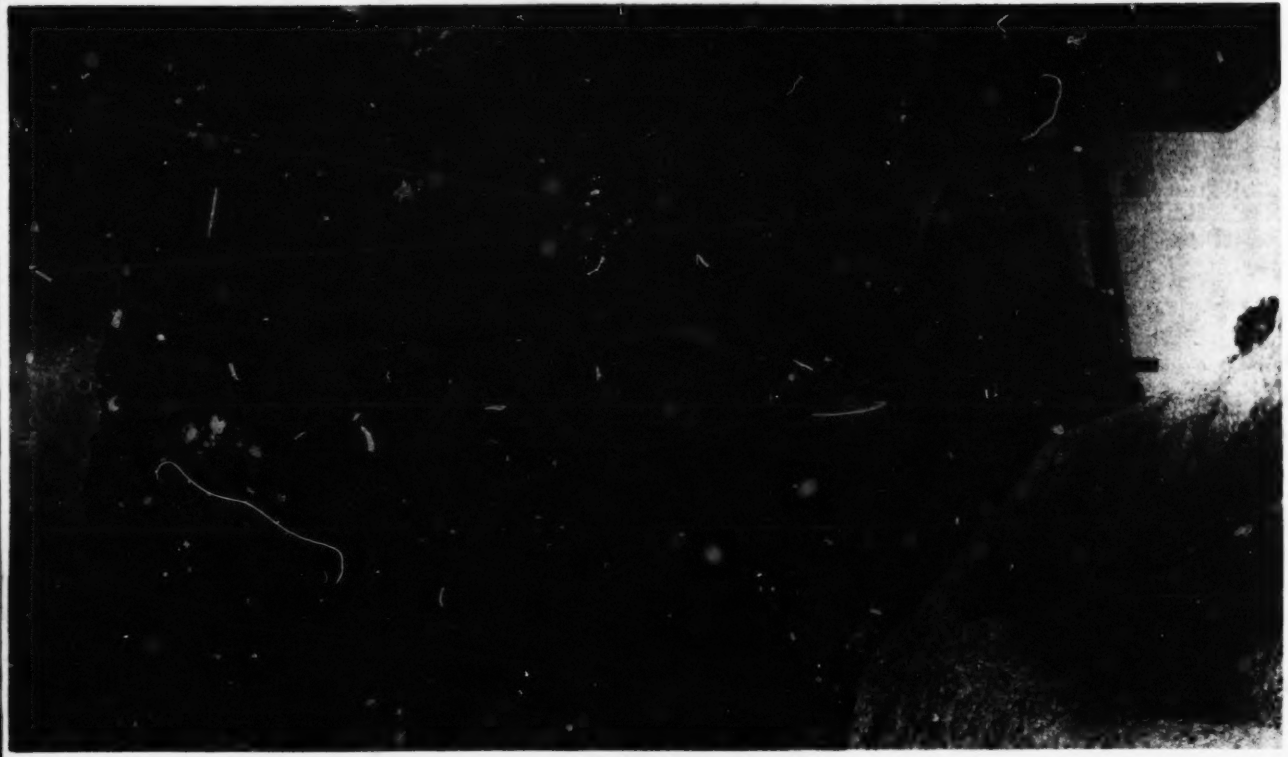

Casa Grande Ruins
(photograph by O. C. Joe)

In the Hohokam Culture, pottery forms went through several stages of pottery development each of which shows the continual use of red figures on a buff colored background. Other Hohokam artifacts that were found include utensils and tools such as stone axes, picks, saws, hoes, hammers, knives and drills. The use of cotton cloth is also indicated by the remains of finely woven cotton garments found at Hohokam sites.[10]

Pottery samples from the Hohokam Culture (left) and Mogollon Culture (right). (drawing by O. C. Joe)

The Mogollon Culture

"By about A.D. 1000, the Hohokam Culture had surpassed that of the Mogollon, especially in economic achievements. About A.D. 1400 however, both the Mogollon and Hohokam Cultures collapsed. It is thought that the Mogollon and Salado peoples moved southward into Chihuahua where they merged with other groups to form the present-day Tarahumara Indians. It is believed that following the departure of the Salado peoples, the Hohokams apparently reverted back to the simpler practices of an earlier day and merged with the Pima Indians, who were encountered by the Spaniards in central Arizona. It has also been theorized that the Hohokams may have become extinct, for it was the Pimas who gave their predecessors the name "Hohokam," meaning "the vanished people."[11]

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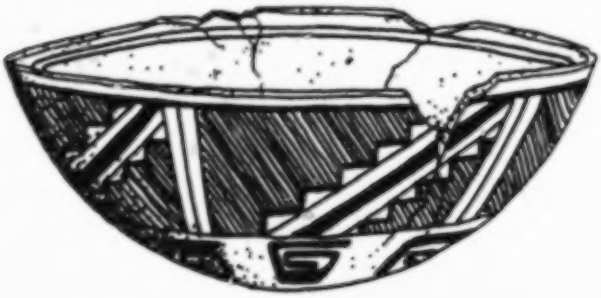
The Anasazi Culture

Another Desert Culture, that of the Anasazi, developed in the plateau country north of the Mogollon and Hohokam cultures. The term Anasazi is a Navajo Indian word meaning "Ancient Ones", and is used in reference to the ancestors of the modern pueblo peoples. The Anasazi had a long history of transitional stages which included (1) The Basket Maker Period, (2) The Modified Basket Maker Period, (3) The Developmental Pueblo Period, and (4) The Great Pueblo Period.



Pottery sample from the Anasazi Culture.
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

The Basket Maker Period ca. A.D. 1-400

Up until about the time of the Birth of Christ, the Anasazi peoples had been basically a simple gathering-collecting culture, using stone tools and weapons similiar to those of the Cochise Culture. Gradually however, the Anasazi Culture began to enter into what is currently called the Basket Maker Period, which was a transitional stage between that of a desert gathering-hunting culture and an agricultural, settled way of life. During this period of transition, the Basket Makers, so called because of the superbly woven baskets they left behind in dry caves, were gradually being influenced by the older Mogollon and Hohokam Cultures whose traits slowly seeped northward into the canyonlands of the Four Corners area.

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The Modified Basket Maker Period, ca. A.D. 400-500

About A.D. 400-500, the Anasazi Culture entered into the Modified Basket Maker Period when agriculture had become more intensive and important, allowing increasing numbers of people to settle close to one another in permanent dwellings.

The assurance of an adequate food supply allowed the Anasazi to turn their time and attention toward improvement of their homes. These dwellings were primarily circular, pit-house clusters, with the lower portion dug out and lined with stone slabs. The entrance way was located either in the roof or through an antechamber. These dwellings were often built in caves or under rock overhangs of cliffs.

Agriculture gained a more secure foothold among the Anasazi during this period with new products, including beans, wild cotton and turkeys being domesticated. The growing list of agricultural products cultivated by the early Anasazi resulted in a stable food supply which could be stored away for use during the winter months or periods of poor crops. The assurance of an adequate food supply led to an increase in leisure time, allowing the people to spend more of their time in making new and decorative items, which included various forms of ornamental jewelry from shell, wood, turquoise, seeds and stone. Crude clay figurines were also made which were possible effigies of Anasazi gods or spirits and representative of a religious system that was expanding in both concept and ceremony.

The Developmental Pueblo Period, ca. A.D. 700-1100

By ca. A.D. 700, the Anasazi had entered into a transitional period between the late Basket Maker and the Pueblo Periods. Large above ground structures, arranged in straight lines or in crescent shapes were being built by clan members who joined new rooms to rooms already inhabited by other members of their clan. These new structures had walls built either of stone, held together by adobe mortar, or were built of poles and adobe, depending upon type and quantity of building materials available at the pueblo site.

These structures, added on to for long periods of time, become larger as this period, which marked the end of the Basket Maker phase and the beginning of the Pueblos (Spanish word for town), saw a marked increase in population. As the population increased, the social and religious organization of the Pueblos became more

complex, with large ceremonial chambers known as Great Kivas being constructed. These ceremonial chambers, used as meeting places for men, reflected both the importance and intricacy of a religion based upon agriculture and nature in the lives of the Anasazi peoples.

The set pattern for Anasazi settlements, the rapid population growth and the expansion of agriculture also saw a flowering of the arts and ceremonies. Cotton textiles were being woven on looms and more elaborate and specialized pottery, usually with black on white designs, were being made. Increased use of the bow and arrow was taking place along with a general expansion of Anasazi influences throughout the Southwest.

The Great Pueblo Period, ca. A.D. 1100-1300

The Anasazi Culture reached its peak during this period, with large, communal buildings, many up to four stories high, or individual settlements of single adjoining rooms. These settlements were built on mesa tops or in high arched recesses in cliff walls. Agriculture, generally dry farming with only isolated irrigation, was practiced in valleys, canyons or open plateau country near the pueblos which contained special storage rooms for housing the harvests against times of drought or famine.

The Anasazi settlements extended across the high Colorado Plateau area in southwestern Colorado, northwestern New Mexico and southeastern Utah. During the latter stages of this period, use of the Great Kivas began to decline and was gradually replaced by increased use of small Kivas.

Just as the Mogollon and Hohokam Cultures had influenced the then emerging Basket Makers, about one thousand years earlier, by ca. A.D. 1200, the Anasazi Pueblo Culture was beginning to reverse the process and "exert some influence on the Mogollon Culture to the south. This pueblo stimulus reached as far as the upper Gila and Salt Rivers, and spread throughout the Rio Grande Valley in New Mexico as well."[12]

Then gradually, the northwestern Anasazi began a decline and reverted back to an existence based upon hunting and gathering rather than agriculture. Slowly this decline spread to other Anasazi areas. After ca. A.D. 1275, the decline became more rapid until settlement after settlement was abandoned. Several explanations

Chaco Canyon
(photograph by Bobby Boyd)

Aztec Ruins
(photograph by Bobby Boyd)

Mesa Verde
(photograph by Bobby Boyd)

have been offered concerning this mysterious abandonment of the great centers of the Anasazi Culture. The twenty-three year drought between 1276 and 1299, established on the basis of dendrochronology or tree-ring dating, appears to head a list which also includes a depletion of wood supply, inter-pueblo fighting, epidemics and/or pressure from hostile, nomadic invaders which may have included the Navajos.

Many historians believe that the great Anasazi Pueblos of the Southwest, including those at Chaco Canyon and Aztec in northwestern New Mexico and Mesa Verde in southwestern Colorado, had long been abandoned by their inhabitants before the arrival of the nomadic Athabascan Navajos into the Four Corners area. Others however, believe that some nomadic group, possibly the Navajo, may have played a part in the overall causes for the abandonment.

Whether this is the case or whether a combination of several or all of these theories is responsible for the abandonment of the Anasazi pueblos is not known. At any rate, by A.D. 1400, Pueblo culture had definitely begun to break up into isolated geographical regions. Later the Pueblo descendants of the Anasazi regrouped in

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new areas and acquired new improved techniques suitable for the areas in which they settled. The Anasazi descendants may be subdivided into desert pueblos - the Hopi of Arizona and Laguna, Zuni and Acoma of New Mexico forming one group, and the river pueblos of north central New Mexico forming the other. The other two of the early Anasazi sites, at Oraibi in Arizona and at Acoma, the "Sky City", in New Mexico, were not abandoned. Since these were founded before A.D. 1400, today they are believed to be the oldest continuously occupied towns in the United States.*[13]

* Acoma on the Mesa was abandoned between 1606 and 1680, but the inhabitants had built their homes at the foot of the Mesa.

Footnotes

1. Wilson, Raymond J. and George Spiero. *Liberty & Union* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1972), p. 5.
2. Jack D. Forbes, *Apache, Navajo and Spaniard* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), p. 193.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*, p. 196.
5. Jonathan Norton Leonard, *Ancient America* (New York: Time Inc., 1967), pp. 12-13.
6. John C. McGregor, *Southwestern Archaeology* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), p. 13.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Lynn Perrigo, *Our Spanish Southwest* (Dallas: Banks Upshaw and Co., 1960), p. 11.
9. Reader's Digest, *America's Fascinating Indian Heritage* (Pleasantville: Reader's Digest Association, Inc., 1978), p. 54.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
11. *Ibid.*
12. McGregor, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
13. Perrigo, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

Chapter 2

THE NAVAJOS ARRIVE

"It is believed that the more remote ancestors of the Navajo who belonged to the broad Nadene language group migrated into the New World about 3,000 years ago.[1] This date places the Nadene as relative newcomers to America, especially when compared to earlier migrations which may have extended as far back as 13,000[2] to 15,000 years ago[3], or possibly earlier."

About 2,000 years after the Nadene people had gradually migrated onto the American Continent in the area of present-day Alaska, sub-families of languages which were off-shoots of the broader Nadene began to develop. Among these sub-families were Tlingit, Eyak, Haida and Athabascan. The largest of these sub-family language groups were the Athabascan, to which the Navajo belong.

During the centuries following the development of the Athabascan sub-family, the Athabascans began to spread out from arctic Alaska into western Canada. One Athabascan group moved into the Pacific Northwest Coastal region and spread as far south as northern California between 1,000 and 1,300 years ago. Another group, the Apacheans, or Southern Athabascans, which included the more recent ancestors for the Navajo, migrated in successive waves across the Great Plains and into the Southwest sometime between 600 and 1,000 years ago.[4]

Through the linguistic technique of glottochronology, devised by Morris Swadesh for dating the differences found within a language family, it is possible to trace languages and their origins through the comparison of non-cultural words and consonant arrangement. By using this techinque of glottochronology, anthropologists have been able to carry out studies between Apachean language groups within the Southwest and other Athabascan speaking tribes in the Pacific Northwest and Canada. The results of one of these studies, carried out in 1971 by Harry Hoijer, concluded that "the Athabascan peoples who moved southward to the Southwest were not uniform in language."[5] "Other studies by Hoijer concerning the migrations of Athabascan groups revealed that the migrating Apacheans had begun to differ according to groups between 400 and 500 years ago as they came into contact with different cultural groups within the areas

Athabascans Distribution C. 1600
(drawing by Jim King)

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through which they slowly migrated or settled for periods of time."[6]

It is almost impossible to reconstruct the social and cultural lives of the Athabascans as they slowly migrated generation after generation toward their ultimate destination in the Southwest. Archaeologists and anthropologists can merely speculate about this period of time and draw whatever logical conclusions they can from the meager evidence available.

It is highly probable that the prehistoric migrating Athabascan Navajos arrived in the Southwest as small bands of hunters and gatherers. The first Apachean groups thought to have reached the Southwest were the Navajo, the San Carlos and the Chiricahua Apaches, followed by the Jicarilla and the Lipan Apaches. The Kiowa Apaches are thought to have migrated into the Southwest at a later time and spread eastward where they assumed a culture which resembled that of later plains tribes rather than the culture of their Athabascan speaking kinsmen who settled in the Southwest.[7]

As the small bands of people moved southward, they were probably under various kinds of leadership such as a chief, band leader, a council of elders, or a council of all adult members of the band. Strong kinship ties may not have existed outside of the family unit[8] and new cultural traits were probably adopted by each individual band as it came into contact with other groups. It is thought that the Navajos may have learned about agriculture and the making of pointed-bottom pottery from the Indians of the Great Plains, with the common use of the forked stick hogan by the Navajos suggesting that they may have migrated through wooded country where they developed the use of wood as frames for their shelters.[9]

Navajo legends also reveal the early Diné as a wandering people, who dressed poorly in animal skins and woven cedar bark and wore yucca fiber sandals. They existed on what few animals they could kill or on seeds of wild plants which they gathered.[10]

Just as difficult to reconstruct as the social and cultural elements of the Navajos during this period of prehistory is that of the general route they followed during their southward migrations. "It is generally believed that they came south on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains, moving down the western Great Plains and then spreading westward to the San Juan River Valley", in the Four Corners area of northern New Mexico. However, some authorities theorize that some or all of the Dine' may have entered the Southwest by migrating southward through the Intermountain Region on

Early Navajo clothing
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

the western side of the Continental Divide, through the Great Basin.[11]

The estimated period of time which marks the arrival of the first Navajos in the Southwest is also difficult to determine. Various estimates by archaeologists and anthropologists cover a wide span of time. One estimate, based upon linguistic evidence, indicates that the Apachean ancestors of the Navajos started their migrations from Canada toward the Southwest about A.D. 956 and arrived as a distinctly Navajo segment sometime around the middle of the 14th century.[12] Other estimates of arrival range from perhaps A.D. 900 to the 1400's with anthropologists Fredrick Webb Hodge and Albert Schroeder asserting that the Athabascans were still migrating south and southwest after 1600.[13]

Whichever estimate is the more correct is secondary to the fact that once the Navajo reached the Southwest they moved westward into the "northeast portion of their present range and eastward" in the general area referred to as the traditional Navajo homeland of Dinétah where they came into contact with the more advanced, sedentary, agricultural Pueblo peoples.[14]

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The Dinétah Phase

Many questions still remain unanswered concerning the arrival and settlement of the early Navajos in the San Juan River area of the Southwest. It is not known at the present time whether they arrived ca. 1500 as small groups of continuously migrating Apachean peoples or whether they were a break-off segment from a larger Apachean group which reached the Southwest between ca. 1550 and 1600.[15]

"The earliest known Navajo sites, ca. 1500, are in the area of the San Juan River and its tributaries, especially in the Gobernador-Largo region."[16] Here, archaeologists and anthropologists have sifted through the artifacts of early Navajo occupation sites in an effort to determine as best they can something about the culture and social life of the early Dine'. Early hogan sites have been tested and estimated dates attached through the use of dendrochronology or tree-ring dating of wood remains used in the construction of hogans. Several problems exist in doing more than estimating the dates of these hogan sites due to several factors: (1) the loss of outer tree

Early forked stick hogans
(oil painting by O. C. Joe)

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rings due to normal decay and weathering of the wood; (2) the possibility that the wood used could have come from earlier Anasazi ruins; or (3) the wood may have already been dead at the time it was taken for use by the Navajos. The early Navajos may not have had any taboos about fearing the dead and used wood from abandoned Anasazi dwellings. Also, taboos about using dead wood which had been struck by lightning may not have existed at this early date.

Another factor in reconstructing early Navajo sites involves the separation of early Navajo ways from those of the Pueblo peoples they may have come into contact with. Discovery of Pueblo influences in the Gobernador Period has led to thinking of the early Dinétah Period as that part of Navajo history immediately before any major Pueblo contacts.

Those Dinétah Period ways which are believed to have been brought into the Southwest by the Navajos include: forked stick hogans; Dinétah utility pottery; some knowledge of agriculture; digging sticks; small shallow basin metate with one hand oval mano; corner and side notched, expanding stem projectile points; ovate (oval) and palmate (resembling a hand) blades; pointed gravers; uniface (one side) choppers; full groove maul (long handled hammer used to drive stakes) and little use of trade material.[17]

Other than the physical evidence left by the early Navajos, through which archaeologists and anthropologists try to reconstruct their life-style,the early Diné left few hints as to their early activities. Having no written language through which they recorded their history, the social scientist can only, through various means, try to reconstruct the Southwestern world of the early Navajos.

The Navajo's oral tradition through which bits and pieces of Navajo history may be gleaned is not in itself totally reliable. It is far too easy for memorized knowledge to change over long periods of time. A lost word here, a changed fact there, added embellishments in order to create a more dramatic effect, all add up to less than accurate historical facts. Thus, while some early legends and myths may contain a historical basis, their reliability must be carefully studied and deciphered by experts in this area.

For that reason, our knowledge of early Navajo activities generally comes from Spanish sources. Yet, here also caution must be stressed, for Spanish sources generally tended to stress only one side, that of the Spanish who recorded many historical facts only as they affected the Spaniards themselves. Also, the purpose of the documented information as well as the writer's position and attitude

must be examined carefully.

Whatever the cautions however, it is to these early Spanish sources that we generally turn in order to reconstruct the history of the Navajo Indians and their impact upon the history of the Southwest. Unfortunately, a long period of time elapsed between the arrival of the early Conquistadores, who burst in upon the Indian inhabitants of the Southwest, and their recognition of the Navajo people as a separate and powerful force that must be recognized within the fight to win and control the vast territory of the Province of New Mexico.

Footnotes

1. Robert Young, *The Role of the Navajo in the Southwestern Drama* (Gallup: The Gallup Independent, 1968), p. 3.
2. Peter Farb, *Man's Rise to Civilization As Shown by the Indians of North America From Primieval Times to the Coming of the Industrial State* (New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1968), p. 196.
3. Young, *loc. cit.*
4. Mary Shepardson, *Navajo Ways in Government: A Study in Political Process*, Menoir 96, American Anthropological Association, Vol. 65, No. 3, Part 2, June 1963. (New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1974). p. 6.
5. Harry Hoijer, *"The Position of The Apachean Languages in the Athapaskan Stock"* Apachean Culture History and Ethnology, Keith H. Basso and Morris E. Opler, eds. Anthropological Papers of the University of Arizona, No. 21. (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1971), p. 5.
6. Shepardson, *loc. cit.*
7. Hoijer, *loc. cit.*
8. Shepardson, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
9. Young, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
10. Matthews. *Navajo Legends*–find footnote material. p. 147 and p. 240, nos. 177-180.
11. Alvin M. Josehpy Fr. *The Indian Heritage of America* (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1968), p. 166.
12. Young, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
13. Jack D. Forbes, *Apache, Navaho and Spaniard* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), p. xii.
14. Shepardson, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
15. Young, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Florence Hawley Ellis, *An Anthropological Study of the Navajo Indians* (New York: Garland Publications, Inc., 1974), pp. 287-288.

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Chapter 3

SPAIN AND THE NEW WORLD

The voyage of Christopher Columbus in 1492 opened up a new and exciting world to the European peoples and ushered mankind into what historians call the modern period of world history.

General agreement now exists that the New World lands of the American Continent were not a lost area of the globe brought to light by the Europeans, but an area which had been discovered many times by various groups of people. Prior to 1492 however, the Europeans were not politically or economically ready for the extensive ocean voyages which would after 1500 radically change both the older nations of Europe and the lives of the inhabitants of previously unknown areas around the globe.

By 1492, when Columbus made the first of his voyages, Europeans had reached a point where ships and navigation equipment allowed ocean voyages of exploration and the printing press made the news of these voyages readily available for others. The key which unlocked the door of discovery lay in the desire of western and northern European nations to break the Italian monopoly on trade with the east by finding another route to the riches of India, China and Japan.

The Portuguese were the first to begin voyages of exploration to locate this new route, hoping to find a way to India by sailing around the continent of Africa. This proved successful, but meanwhile, the Kingdoms of Castile and Aragon were united and a new Kingdom of Spain was created. This unification allowed Spain to turn its attention to matters other than warfare and resulted in the launching of Columbus upon his voyage, which in time brought great amounts of wealth and prestige to Spain, but much misery to the Indian inhabitants of the lands Spain colonized.

The first Spanish settlement in the New World was made on the island of Santo Domingo in 1493. Later, the center of Spanish activity in exploration shifted to Havana, Cuba. From this center, Ponce de Leon began his exploration of Florida in 1513. Four years later, in 1517, Francisco Hernandez de Cordova undertook an expedition to the Yucatan Peninsula to secure a cargo of slaves. Basically, most early Spanish explorations were founded upon the

hope of finding an all-water passage or strait through the American Continent. A passageway which would eventually lead toward the original goal of a new trade route to the wealth of the east.

One such effort to find the passage was taken by Alonzo Alverez de Pineda who left Jamaica in 1519 with four ships. No passage to the east was found, but Pineda did map and explore the Gulf Coast of North America and discovered the mouth of the Mississippi River which the Indians of the region called the "Father of Waters".

Another voyage of exploration, not in search of the elusive passage, but in search of gold was brought about by the tales told by Cordova after his voyage to the Yucatan Peninsula. According to stories told by the Cordova expedition, there were fabulously rich cities located far inland from the Yucatan. These stories helped convince the Spanish governor of Cuba to send an expedition to check on the truthfulness of these tales about golden cities in Mexico.

The expedition to seek the truth about these stories was led by Hernando Cortés. The Cortés expedition did indeed find fabulous cities where gold and other treasures was commonplace. The great Aztec capital of Tenochititlan soon fell to the Conquistadores under Cortés' leadership and following the destruction of the city, a new Spanish capital, Mexico City, rose to dominate the Aztec's homeland in the valley of Mexico.

Cortez conquering Aztec capital of Tenochititlan
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

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Mexico City later became the base for not only administering the conquered lands which were to become known as New Spain, but also served as the base for later expeditions which explored the Southwest.

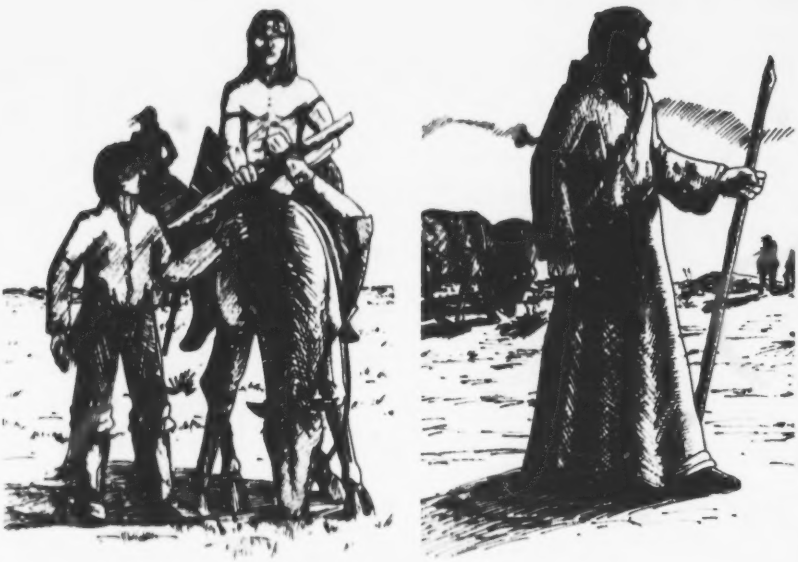
Cortés, the Conqueror, was later charged with administrative mismanagement by jealous rivals, and in 1529, while he was answering these charges, a Spanish adventurer, Nuno de Guzmán began an expedition into the northern frontier of Mexico to acquire land of his own. Guzmán took a group of settlers up the west coast of Mexico and settled in an area he named New Galicia, now known as Sinaloa. In 1531, Guzmán founded the town of San Miguel de Culiacán.

It was at Culiacán in 1536 that one of the most dramatic adventures involving the early Spanish explorers became known when Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, two Spanish companions, Alonzo del Castillo Maldanado and Andres Dorantes, along with a Negro slave, (Estebanico or Stephen), struggled into the city with a great number of Indian followers. The story of Cabeza de Vaca's journey astounded authorities when it was later told in Mexico City.

Originally, de Vaca and his companions had been members of the 1528 expedition of Panfilo de Narvaéz which had sought in Florida another golden empire such as found in Mexico. Narvaéz had been with Cortés in the Mexico campaign and, fed by rumors and speculations of gold and empires to conquer, he had set out on the ill-fated expedition with Cabeza de Vaca acting as secretary-treasurer.

The Narvaéz party went ashore and sent their ships back with orders to return at a later date. They had no success in their quest for gold and with only 250 survivors left, they constructed crude log rafts which they tied together with strips of hide and began the long journey southward along the Gulf Coast toward the Spanish settlements. After passing the mouth of the Mississippi River, a storm off the Texas coast wrecked the rafts and most of the men were lost except for 80 who were washed ashore.

Indians and disease quickly reduced the ranks of the 80 survivors. Among those held as slaves by the Indians were Cabeza de Vaca, who soon saw a way of surviving the rigorous and dangerous life as an Indian-held slave. Cabeza de Vaca, through the use of his knowledge of medicine and good foresight, soon gained a reputation as a medicine man. Part of this reputation was based upon the fact that he consistently refused to accept gifts and fees from his Indian patients, thus the Indians were perplexed and kept off guard.



Cabeza de Vaca as a wanderer
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

As his reputation as a medicine man spread to neighboring tribes, de Vaca would join one group and then another, constantly moving southward toward the Spanish settlements of New Spain. He was accompanied by three other survivors of the Narvaéz Expedition, Alonso del Castillo Maldanado, Andres Dorantes and the slave, Esteban.

Slowly, usually with a following of Indians, the four made their way toward the Rio Grande, moving from tribe to tribe. They crossed the Rio Grande near the Big Bend on the present-day Texas-Mexico border and wandered on toward the Sonora River, where they met a group of Spanish slave hunters who were amazed to find the three ragged Spaniards, accompanied by the slave Esteban and a great many Indians. The small party was then taken to Culiacán and later on to Mexico City, where Cabeza de Vaca gave a startling report to Viceroy Mendoza about his years of wandering and survival through the Southwest. Later, de Vaca returned to Spain where he wrote a book describing his experiences. Included in the book was an account which related stories told by the Indians about seven great cities which were said to be somewhere north of the route the de Vaca party had taken from the Texas coast back to Mexico City.

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The vast wealth of the Aztec Empire of Mexico conquered by Hernando Cortés in 1519 and the Inca Empire in South America conquered by Francisco Pizzaro in 1531 had not satisfied the Spaniards' hunger for gold, especially while a vast unknown area still lay before them which might contain even greater and wealthier Indian empires than either the Aztecs or Incas.

Cabeza de Vaca's story of the seven great cities fell into place like the missing part of a puzzle in the minds of the Spanish, for a corresponding tale had long been a part of the legends of Europe.

This legend of the Seven Cities was perhaps of Portuguese origin, dating back to A.D. 1150. In that year, the Moors captured the city of Merida, Spain, and among the Christians fleeing from the Moslem conquerors were seven bishops and their congregations. They were supposed to have sailed away westward, finally landing on some beautiful island. There, they were supposed to have burned their ships and founded seven cities that finally became great and wealthy towns. Hence, many explorers sought their location in the New World.[1] This combination of European legend and the Indian tale supposedly told to Cabeza de Vaca by the Indians, seemed to confirm that such cities did indeed exist. The only problem left, the Spaniards felt, was to find them. Thus, a new interest in the New World, especially in the Southwest, was aroused.

While tales of the fabled Seven Cities brought new and normal interest in the possible wealth to be found in the new lands, other factors were also at work in making the Spanish more aware of the new lands across the sea. These new lands, lands for the taking, proved to be almost as great a magnet in drawing Europeans to the New World as the possible gold to be found there.

In European society where wealth was measured in land holdings and where land was at a premium and laws of primogeniture (the passing of land holdings intact to the eldest son) existed, the lands of the New World appeared to be the answer for many landless men's dreams of obtaining wealth and social position.

Combined with land was also the need for labor to make it produce. Again the New World offered the answer. The Indians of the New World were plentiful and by European standards uncivilized. Thus, in forcing the Indians to work on land acquired by the Spaniards, the conquerors felt they were doing the Indians a service by bringing European civilization to them as well as receiving a greater service by having a large labor force.

Also, along with the land and slaves was the overpowering desire

of the Catholic Church to extend its religious beliefs to the non-Christian peoples of the New World. This desire was also encouraged especially in view of the fact that the Catholic Church had been on the decline since the break-away of large numbers of people to the newly emerging Protestant religions. Here was a chance to bring about new growth within the church as well as Christianize the peoples of the new lands.

Footnotes

1. Warren Beck, *New Mexico, A History of Four Centuries* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), p. 41.

Chapter 4

THE SPANISH CONQUER THE SOUTHWEST

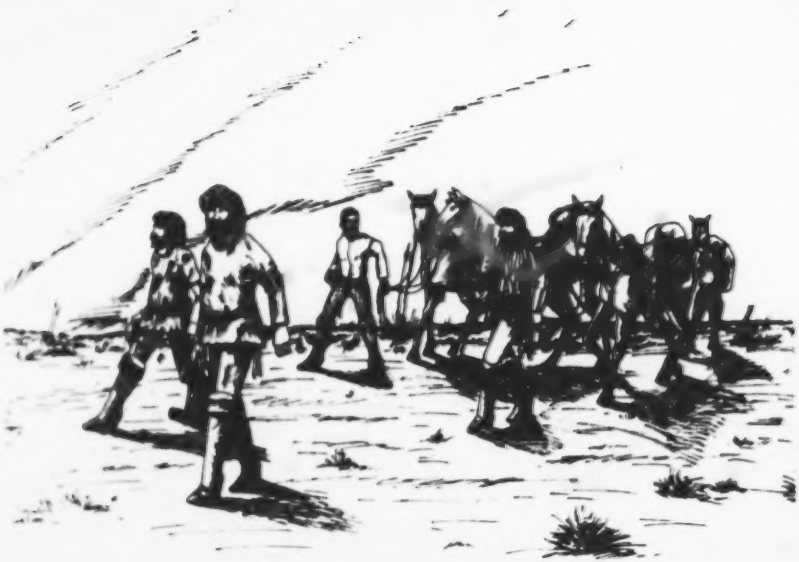
"Within six years of Cabeza de Vaca's arrival at Culiacán, seven expeditions had ventured northward, three by sea and four by land."[1]

In 1538, two Franciscan friars, Juan de la Asunción and Pedro Nadal, carried out an expedition into northern Mexico in search of a place referred to in Aztec legends as the "Seven Caves of Chicomoztoc or Iztlan", supposedly the origin of the Aztec peoples. The friars planned to check the legend's validity as well as convert the Indian peoples they came into contact with to Christianity.

By 1539, Cabeza de Vaca's story of the fabled Seven Cities had caused the Viceroy of New Spain, Antonio Mendoza, to send out an expedition to check on the existence of these cities. Mendoza chose two Franciscan friars, Fray Marcos de Niza and Fray Honoratus, to lead the expedition which was accompanied by an escort of Indians. The slave Esteban, who was familiar with both the country and the tale of the Seven Cities, acted as guide for the small group which left Culiacán in early 1539.

Shortly after leaving Culiacán, Fray Honoratus dropped out of the party because of illness, but the remainder of the expedition pushed onward toward what they hoped would be the first European glimpse of the fabled Seven Cities. As the small band proceeded further and further into the unexplored frontier area of New Spain, "Fray Marcos began to have misgivings about the guide Esteban, who was enjoying himself heartily. To the Indians he was a medicine man and a magician. Esteban, to live up to this role, began to wear bells at the ankles and elbows and carry a gourd rattle decorated with colored feathers."[2]

To separate himself from the unconventional behavior of Esteban, Fray Marcos directed that the slave leave the main party and push ahead as an advance scout. Esteban was instructed to send back messages in the form of crosses, ranging from small to large, depending upon the importance of what he had discovered. Esteban



Esteban (Negro slave) and Fray Marcos (Catholic priest) in search for the Seven Cities of Cibola. (drawing by O. C. Joe)

with some three hundred Indians crossed the desert and mountains of present-day Arizona and finally had their first and, unfortunately for Esteban, their last look at the Seven Cities, the Zuni Pueblos.

Upon approaching the first of the pueblos, Háwikuh, Esteban met with the Pueblo chief. "Rattling his gourd, Esteban demanded gifts of turquoise and women. Unknown to Esteban, the gourd rattle was the same type used by the enemies of Háwikuh. The Pueblo Indians attacked the group and in their attempt to flee, Esteban and many of his Indian followers were killed."[3]

A few of Esteban's Indian companions managed to escape and hurried back to report to Fray Marcos on the fate of Esteban. Here much controversy exists over the actual conduct of Fray Marcos de Niza. Following the news of Esteban's death, Fray Marcos quickly retreated back to Mexico City where he presented a written report on the success of the expedition. In the report, Fray Marcos stated that following the death of Esteban, he had continued on until he was in sight of the Pueblo which he reported as being "a very beautiful city, . . .bigger than the City of Mexico."[4] In his references to the pueblo, de Niza called it the first of the Seven Cities of Cibola, using the term cibola (buffalo cow) by which the legendary Seven

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Cities were thereafter called.

Historians today generally suspect that Fray Marcos' report was a fraud. Few believe that the friar actually journeyed onward to Háwikuh, especially since not enough time elapsed between the arrival of the messenger bearing the news of Esteban's death and de Niza's arrival in Mexico City. Also, as later expeditions discovered, what Fray Marcos de Niza claimed to have seen and what actually existed were not the same.

Fray Marcos' report had an immediate and tremendous effect upon the inhabitants of Mexico City. No one questioned the truthfulness of a report written by a man of the church and plans were begun for a great expedition to bring the Seven Cities of Cibola under Spanish control. Before this famed expedition, ultimately led by Coronado, could be organized, two other expeditions were well under way, one led by Francisco Ulloa and the other by Hernando de Soto.

The Ulloa Expedition

Francisco Ulloa's expedition sent by Cortés had already started by the time de Niza had returned to Mexico City. Ulloa had sailed in 1539 from Acapulco with three ships, the Santa Agueda, Trinidad and the Santo Tomás, to seek an all water passage to the Seven Cities which Cabeza de Vaca had told about in his book. Ulloa sailed up the Gulf of California to the mouth of the Colorado River. However, the treacherous sand bars and the roughness of the water caused by ocean tides meeting the outward flowing water from the river kept the expedition from entering the river. The expedition then turned southward and sailed around the tip of present-day Baja California, before determining that lower California was a peninsula rather than an island.* Ulloa then sailed up the California coast where the winter of 1539-1540 was spent. In April, 1540, one ship returned to report on the success of the expedition and the remaining two ships sailed up the Pacific Coast, never to be heard from again.

The de Soto Expedition

Another expedition which also left in 1538 before de Niza's return was that of Hernando de Soto. De Soto had been intrigued by Cabeza de Vaca's book and had received a commission to conquer

* This information was however forgotten and the discovery had to be made again.

Florida and all lands north and west from Cuba.

De Soto sailed from Spain in April 1538 and left Cuba in May 1539. The de Soto Expedition was guided by Juan Ortiz, a survivor of the ill-fated Narvaéz Expedition of 1528. Ortiz had been living among the Indians for ten years before he was picked up near present-day Tampa Bay, Florida, by the de Soto Expedition. Ortiz had heard stories about gold somewhere inland. The de Soto Expedition traveled over a large portion of the southeastern United States, including present-day Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi. After crossing the Mississippi River, the expedition wandered westward into Arkansas and came, at one time, within three hundred miles of the Coronado Expedition which was in the Kansas area.

Following de Soto's death, his followers first attempted an overland journey toward the Spanish settlements to the south. This attempt was soon abandoned and they returned to the Mississippi River, where they built seven small boats and set sail along the Gulf Coast toward Mexico. Finally, three hundred survivors of the expedition arrived in Panuco, present-day Tampico, Mexico, with nothing to show for their efforts except tales of their adventures.

The de Soto Expedition had found no gold in its wanderings and de Soto had died near the Mississippi River and his body was buried in the river. In general, the entire purpose of finding great wealth was a failure, but the exploration by de Soto gave Spain a claim to a vast area of North America.

Footnotes

1. Lynn Perrigo, *Our Spanish Southwest* (Dallas: Banks Upshaw and Co., 1960), p. 18.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

Chapter 5

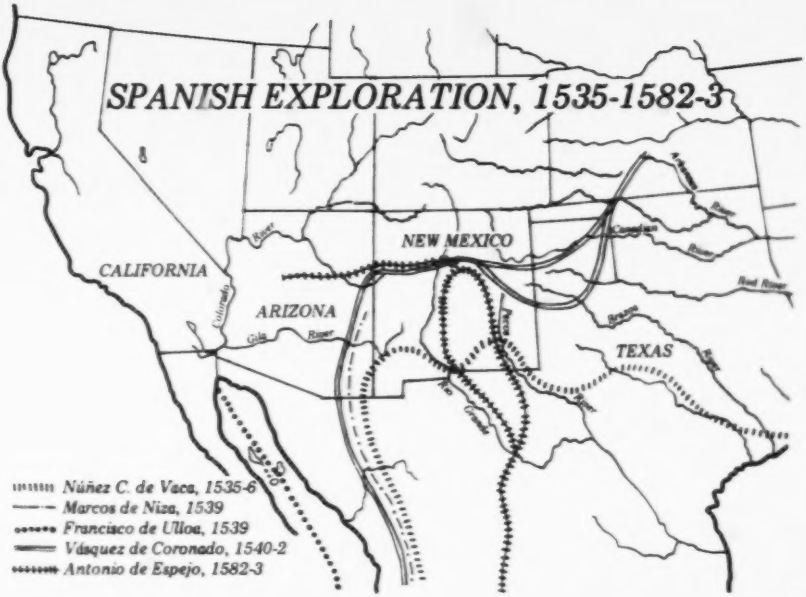
CORONADO EXPLORES THE SOUTHWEST

The commission to explore, locate and conquer the Seven Cities of Cibola fell to Don Francisco Vásquez de Coronado, Governor of New Galicia. The Coronado Expedition began gathering at Compostela, west of Mexico City in the winter and spring of 1539-1540. Moving up the west coast of New Spain, the party traveled to Culiacán and onward into the raw frontier area. Ahead were the fabled Seven Cities of Gold which had been seen and recorded by Fray Marcos de Niza. De Niza was acting as guide for the two hundred twenty-five cavalrymen, sixty footmen, five friars and nearly one thousand servants, military guards and Indians. The party also took approximately fifteen hundred head of livestock which included horses, mules, cattle, sheep and swine.

As the expedition pushed into the present-day state of Sonora, they approached the settlement of Chiametla. Here the appearance of Machior Diaz made changes in the plans of the Coronado Expedition. Diaz had been sent earlier by Viceroy Mendoza to check out Fray Marcos de Niza's story.

Diaz had traveled as far as the Gila River in present-day Arizona but found nothing like what de Niza had described. However, Diaz had questioned the Indians he met along the way about the Seven Cities and was given much information about them, but not the description of wealth and jewels about which de Niza had written. Diaz then left to return to Mexico City to make his report to the Viceroy.

Coronado at this point decided to advance with a small force to check out what might actually lie ahead in the Seven Cities. After leaving the main part of the expedition at Culiacán, Coronado moved onward into Tierra Nueva (New Land) where the Seven Cities were supposed to be located. Meanwhile, supplies for the expedition were to be sent by sea under the command of Alarcon who was to sail up the Colorado River. Alarcon, sailing seventeen days after Coronado's small party left Culiacán, soon found that he could not meet up with the expedition and hearing that Coronado was already in Cibola, began his return voyage to the eastern coast of Mexico.



(drawing by Jim King)

Nearing their long awaited goal, Coronado's advance party moved slowly up to the first of the Seven Cities, Háwikuh, where they saw only a small pueblo, nothing like that which de Niza had earlier described. Háwikuh fell to the Spaniards after a brief battle. With the discovery that the pueblo was only a poor adobe village, de Niza was forced to return immediately to Mexico City in order to escape the wrath of Coronado's men.

Meanwhile, the Indians told the Spaniards about people to the west who lived in pueblos similar to those at Cibola. Coronado then sent Pedro de Tovar with seventeen mounted men and three or four footmen to what the Spanish later called Tusayán, or the Hopi Pueblos.

The Hopi Pueblos took a defensive position but after a brief skirmish the Hopis asked for peace. Later Tovar returned with token presents of some cotton cloth, a few tanned skins, some native birds (possibly turkeys), a plentiful supply of maize, flour, piñon nuts and a small amount of turquoise.[1] The Hopis pledged their loyalty to the Spanish and their king. During the Spanish contact with the Hopis, the Indians related to Tovar a tale of a great river to the west of their pueblo and an even stranger tale of an exceptionally

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tall people who lived there.

When Tovar returned to Cibola in mid-August, he retold this tale to Coronado who then directed Captain Don García de López Cárdenas with twenty - five horsemen to investigate the story. Cárdenas and his party traveled westward and discovered the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River. They tried to descend the awesome gorge but failed and returned to Cibola.

While Coronado was still at Cibola in 1540, he was visited by a small group of Indians from a pueblo named Cicúique or Cicúye (later called Pecos). The small visiting party was headed by two chiefs, called Bigotes (Many Whiskers) and Cacique (Governor) by Coronado. The Indians had heard of the bearded white men and had come to see them. Coronado had earlier invited all the Indians to come and pledge obedience to him and the king and these two had come probably more to satisfy their own curiosity about the white strangers than to make the pledge. Here the story of de Niza and Esteban about the strange cattle (buffalo) was repeated, especially the fact that the pueblo of Bigotes and Cacique was located on the edge of the Buffalo Plains. Also, the existence of another pueblo, called Acoma, was told to the Spaniards who were greatly interested, especially when it was learned that it lay on the route to the Pueblo of Cicúique.

Coronado then sent Captain Hernando de Alvarado with several men, including Fray Padilla, to accompany the two chiefs back to their pueblo and to explore the country and tell the other Indians to the east about the Coronado mission.

The party left Cibola (Háwikuh) on August 29, 1540[2] and traveled to Acoma "the Sky City." From there, they moved on to the Rio Grande where they met a friendly group of Indians from the Pueblos of Tiguex.*

After trading with these Indians the party traveled on to the Taos Pueblo and then back to the Tiguex area, and finally to Cicúique which was located on the edge of the Buffalo Plains.

When the party arrived at Cicúique, Alvarado met two Indians, Ysopete and El Turco, who were to have a dramatic and far reaching effect on the Spanish conquest of the Rio Grande area.

Early in October, Alvarado's small party left the Pueblo of Cicúique and rode out onto the Buffalo Plains where it is assumed they became the first Europeans to go buffalo hunting. Ysopete

* Spanish name from the Tigua Indians of the Bernalillo area.

Field of buffalo
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

and El Turco had been chosen as guides for the Spaniards, and led them down the Pecos River before turning eastward along the Canadian River.

While on the last part of this journey, El Turco told Alvarado that the Spaniards should take a northeastward course toward Quivira, a land which held great wealth in both gold and silver. Woven into El Turco's tale of great riches to be found in Quivira was his own personal story about a gold bracelet which be said had been taken away from him by his captors and owners, Bigotes and Cacique. Intrigued as he must have been by these stories of gold, Alvarado closely followed Coronado's instructions and turned the small expedition back toward Cicúique Pueblo.

It is possible that Alvarado had several reasons for not pursuing El Turco's luring tales about Quivira. Foremost was Coronado's instructions that the party was to move eastward not northeastward. Also, Coronado had set an eighty day time limit for the expedition and as an Army man, Alvarado probably felt duty bound to follow exactly all instructions given by his superiors. Alvarado also wanted to see firsthand El Turco's golden bracelet in order to establish proof of what possibly lay in the direction of Quivira.

Upon the party's arrival at Cicúique Pueblo, Alvarado questioned both Bigotes and Cacique about the bracelet. Alvarado put them in chains and started toward the Rio Grande where he planned to meet Captain Cárdenas at the Tiguex Pueblo of Alcanfor, or Coofer, the southern most of the Tiguex group* on the west bank of the Rio Grande, near the present-day site of Bernalillo, New Mexico.

* There were twelve Pueblos, six on each side of the Rio Grande.

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Meanwhile, the main body of the expedition, under the leadership of Arellano, had arrived at Cibola. Following their arrival, Coronado selected thirty of the most rested men, and moved eastward to the Rio Grande and the Pueblo of Alcanfor which Cárdenas was preparing as winter lodgings for the expedition. Arellano was instructed to remain at Cibola and rest his men for twenty days before following Coronado's footsteps to the Rio Grande and winter quarters.

The Spaniards forceable removal of the Pueblo peoples of Alcanfor and their continued demands for all the Tiguex Pueblos to provide food and other items to the expedition caused great hardship and suffering among the Indians. Food and clothing supplies had been gathered by the Indians to carry their own families through the winter. Any supplies given to the Spaniards other than a minimal amount would cause hardships for their own people. Unfortunately the Spanish were insistent, freely taking any goods they found and demanding more from the already hard-pressed Indians.

Finally during the winter of 1540-1541, the Indians of the Tiguex Pueblos refused to give any more provisions of food and clothing to the Spaniards and open warfare broke out, lasting until March of that year. Some of the Pueblos were burned and many of the Indians were killed or taken as servants by the Spaniards. Following the defeat of the Tiguex Pueblos and the coming of spring, Coronado decided to take action on the Quivira story which El Turco, or the "Turk", had related to Alvarado earlier in 1540. The expedition now readied itself to go in search of this land of fabled wealth. On April 23, 1541, Coronado led his entire force out from Tiguex. Four days later, the party had arrived at the pueblo of Ciculique where Bigotes was released (Cacique had been released earlier). With El Turco and Ysopete as guides, the expedition set out for the Buffalo Plains. They built a bridge across the Ciculique (now Pecos River) and proceeded on toward the land of gold. Traveling at a leisurely pace, the expedition traveled across eastern New Mexico to the Texas-New Mexico line. Here they encountered vast herds of buffalo and Indian bands which the Spanish called Querechos or wanderers, Apaches who lived off the buffalo.* At this point, Coronado and his men began to grow suspicious of El Turco, especially when Ysopete repeatedly tried to warn the Spaniards that El

* Probably the name Querecho came from the Tiguex Pueblos and was used by them to indicate their trade with the Queres or Keres Pueblos of New Mexico. To the Spanish, all plains Indians who were not Pueblos were at first referred to as Querechos.

Turco was lying and trying to lead them in a direction other than toward Quivira. Ysopete was from Quivira and familiar with the route.

Coronado then turned southward from the Canadian River, still lead by El Turco. They were now on the Llano Estacado** in the Texas Panhandle and finally came to Tule Canyon where they met a group of Indians whom the Spanish called Teyas.

Coronado then divided his forces, taking thirty men as an expedition to try to find Quivira. The main force, under the command of Arellano, returned to the Pecos River, pushed up it until they reached the bridge built earlier by Coronado and returned to Tiguex which was still deserted by the Indians.

Coronado and his thirty men, led by Ysopete, with El Turco now in chains, then moved northeastward in the direction which Ysopete had maintained all the time was the way to Quivira. They "averaged possibly eight to ten miles per day. Later they averaged about twelve to fifteen miles per day as they neared Quivira and their expectations quickened."[3] Finally, they reached the Quivira River, the present-day Arkansas River and the first Quivira villages about June 6,[4] thirty-five days after leaving Palo Duro Canyon and seventy-seven days after leaving Tiguex. Here the expedition found only small scattered settlements of round thatched lodges, with smoke holes in the roofs. There was no wealth, no gold, silver, or jewels. No large cities with a crowned ruler and a court as El Turco had said, only tattooed Wichita Indians of a primitive culture similiar to the Teyas and Querechos that the party had met earlier.

Coronado placed the Indians under royal authority and then scouted and claimed the area for the King. The party stayed in the Quivira area nearly a month before deciding in early August to return to Tiguex to rendezvous with the main party.

Meanwhile, El Turco was still being held in chains and the decision was made to execute him for his lies. Upon questioning, El Turco told Coronado that the Pueblo of Ciculique had been part of the plot to lure the Spaniards out onto the plains where they would either get lost and die, or grow so weak that when they returned the Pecos people could easily kill them. Following this confession, the Turk was secretly strangled to death and his body buried during the night in order not to arouse the anger of the

** Staked plains, so named because of the ridge or escarpment which looked like a stockade or palisaded rim.

Indians of Quivira.

In mid-August, 1541, the small party, using Quivira Indian guides, including Ysopete, began the return trip to Tiguex. They arrived back at the Pueblo of Ciculique where they were met by Arellano and forty men. The entire group then returned to Tiguex where Arellano had made preparations for the oncoming winter. Following the winter of 1541-1542, preparations were made for the entire expedition to return to Mexico in April 1542. Three Franciscan friars chose to remain at Tiguex, along with a few assistants to try to convert the Indians to Christianity. All three of the friars met death at the hands of the Indians and only a few of their assistants ever made it back to New Spain.

The Coronado Expedition now returned to Culiacán over the same route they had taken earlier. Gone were the dreams of fabulous wealth in the Seven Cities of Cibola. The untold riches of Quivira had also proven to be false. Only the adventures of the expedition and their exploration of a vast area of Tierra Nueva (New Lands) for Spain were to have any lasting effects. However, the time spent in the Rio Grande Valley would prove in the future to be the basis for the permanent Spanish settlement of New Mexico.

Following the shattered dreams of quick wealth in the New Land, the Spanish concentrated on discovering, conquering and utilizing much of these new areas. There was still land and souls to be saved, souls which could work the land and make it profitable. And always, there was the thought of finding that elusive passageway to the east and the vague hope that wealth did lie somewhere, in some form, within the new lands.

The opening of the Phillipine Islands and the trading route back to Spain along the California coast made the security of this coastline of the utmost importance to the Spanish. Thus, between 1565 and 1584, various attempts were made to establish secure Spanish control over this area.

The discovery of silver mines north of the Mexico City area now led to an immediate push of the frontier of Nueva Vizcaya (New Spain) in the early 1580's. New interest was now aroused in the forgotten lands of Coronado[5] which were nearer to those recently settled areas and provided a more direct route up the Rio Grande rather than across the mountains and deserts of the former west coast route used by Coronado.

In 1579, an Indian, captured in a Spanish slave raid, reported that large settlements existed to the north where the people raised

cotton and abundant food.[6] This led to an expedition by two friars and a company of soldiers under the leadership of Francisco Sanchez Chamuscado. This party left Santa Barbara in June 1581 and traveled up the Rio Grande to the Tiguex Pueblos. The soldiers and Chamuscado returned, but two of the friars remained to work among the Pueblo people.

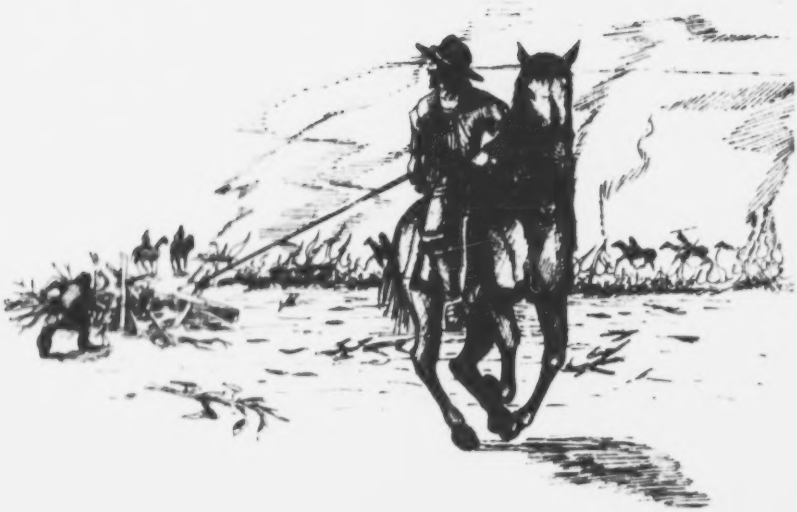
Later concern for the safety of the two friars led to an expedition headed by Antonio de Espejo in 1583. The Espejo Expedition traveled up to the Pueblos on the Rio Grande, but found that the two friars had been killed by the Indians of Puaray. Espejo then set out on several side trips to explore the country, traveling east to the Buffalo Plains, then back to the Rio Grande. "After visiting the Keres area, Espejo led the group from Zia to Acoma, by way of present-day Laguna." Four leagues before reaching Laguna, Espejo recorded, "we found here peaceful Indian mountaineers who brought us tortillas even though we did not need them." These Indians were the Navajo Apaches, called Querechos by Espejo and Perez de Luxan. This is the first recorded contact between Navajos and Spaniards, and it is interesting to note that the former were corn users---making tortillas—in 1582".[7]

After visiting the Acoma Pueblo, Espejo wrote "Because of the war this Pueblo has with the Querechos Indians, . . . it is built on a high rocky cliff." The Querechos Indians are believed by many historians to have been an early Navajo group which were first encountered on the plains east of the Rio Puerco by Coronado in 1541. Espejo also reported that "The mountains thereabout (the vicinity of Acoma) apparently give promise of mines and other riches, but we did not go to see them as the people from there were many and warlike. The mountain people come to aid those of the settlements, who call the mountain people Querechos."[8]

Though war existed between the different Indian groups, there was also commerce; the people of Acoma exchanged cotton mantles to the Navajos for deerskins[9] during times of peace.

Espejo and his party then traveled westward in search of mineral wealth, and visited the Hopi Pueblos. In returning from the Hopi village of Awatobi further west, Espejo again encountered Querechos (Navajos) in the area south of Mt. Taylor. A battle between the two groups occurred and the Spanish burned the Querechos shacks and destroyed a maize (corn) field.

In his explorations, Espejo also examined some mines, questioned Indians in the area about mining and collected some samples



Navajo shacks and corn being destroyed.
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

of what the Indians called "shining ore". Espejo's written report in 1583 exaggerated the possible mineral wealth of the northern frontier lands he now referred to as "New Mexico". The first recorded use of this name possibly represented the hope of the Spaniards that this new land would be similiar to Mexico itself as a source of great treasure in minerals.[10]

The increasing knowledge gathered about the possibly rich lands of "New Mexico" now brought about an added interest on the part of many Spaniards in the Mexico area. This interest however would have to remain just an interest. These new lands in theory belonged to the Spanish crown and no one was allowed to venture into them without the express permission of the King and his advisors. Even so, in 1590 an illegal expedition headed by Gaspar Castaño de Sosa with 175 people ventured into New Mexico, conquered the Pueblos of Pecos, Taos and Tiguex but were brought back by a Spanish force sent by the Viceroy.

Later, an ill-fated, illegal party led by Francisco de Leyva Bonilla and Antonio Gutierrez de Humana went to find treasures in the new lands. The party traveled to the Pueblos and then on to Quivira and beyond, where it disappeared. Years later, news of what occurred on this disastrous expedition finally reached the Spanish settlements, in the form of a story of treachery and murder which

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was told by the sole survivor, Alonso Sanchez.[11]

All of this activity was to eventually lead to a plan to colonize the area of New Mexico. The idea of mineral wealth, large populated Indian villages and more information about the area, plus the northward push of Spanish settlements in Mexico now set the stage for the first great colonizing expedition, that of Don Juan de Oñate.

Footnotes

1. Herbert E. Bolton, *Coronado, Knight of Pueblo and Plains* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1949), p. 137.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 181.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 286-288.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 291.
5. Lynn Perrigo, *Our Spanish Southwest* (Dallas: Banks Upshaw and Co., 1960), p. 30.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Jack D. Forbes, *Apache, Navaho and Spaniard* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), p. 57.
8. Frank McNitt, *Navajo Wars* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1972), p. 1.
9. Lee J. Correll, *Through White Men's Eyes: A Contribution to Navajo History* (Vol. 1, Window Rock, Arizona: The Navajo Times Publishing Co., 1976), p. 3.
10. Warren Beck, *New Mexico, A History of Four Centuries* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), p. 3.
11. Perrigo, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

Chapter 6

OÑATE COLONIZES NEW MEXICO

In the fifty-six year period between Coronado's expedition in 1540-1542, and that of Oñate and his colonists in 1598, various attempts had been made by individuals to secure the governorship of New Mexico. The candidates' petitions were examined by the Council of the Indies but all were rejected. Finally, the contract was awarded on September 21, 1595 to Juan de Oñate and became official one month later.

Oñate, the son of the former governor of New Galicia and wealthy mine owner, was proclaimed governor and captain general, chief discoverer, and "pacifier of the province of New Mexico". The colonizing expedition had been privately financed, with the primary aim of "the conversion of the Indians of the province to Christainity".[1]

"The awarding of the contract to Oñate as governor for the colonization of New Mexico and its immediate environs covered an area which was generally better known by this time, if only in its bare outline form."[2] With this knowledge, limited though it was, the expedition began outfitting in Chihuahua, gathering about 400 colonists, soldiers, Mexican Indian servants and Franciscan missionaries. "During the three years it took to assemble the expedition, jealous enemies of Oñate, tried to undermine the expedition but their attempts did little more than delay the final departure from Santa Barbara on February 7, 1598."[3] As the party of adventuresome colonists moved out toward an unknown future, with about 80 carts and wagons and their livestock herds which consisted of cattle, horses, sheep, hogs, and mules, it marked the end of the era of the Conquistadores, those seekers of golden cities to conquer and instant wealth for the taking. Now the wealth lay in the saving of souls and in wringing a profit from the stubborn soil of the new colony.

As the colonizing expedition entered the province of New Mexico, an advance party moved ahead to select a site for the new colony. The advance expedition moved up the Rio Grande to the Tewa Pueblo of Ohke, located at the junction of the Rio Grande

with the Rio Chama. On August 18, 1598, the main body of settlers arrived at the site which was soon named San Juan de los Caballeros. A church was quickly built and dedicated to St. John the Baptist, on September 8.[4]

The building of the church marked the beginning of part of the contract calling for spread of the Christian religion in the new colony. The province was now divided into seven missionary districts and Spanish alcaldes or overseers were appointed for each district. "The Franciscan missionaries who had accompanied the expedition were each assigned a district with two of the friars, Fray Francisco de Zamora and Fray Alonso de Lugo being placed over the Apaches and Navajos. The areas were divided between these two men, with Lugo in charge of the Jemez district which included the Apaches and 'Cocoyes' people who farmed and lived in jacales, possibly the Navajos, with the word jacales referring to the forked stick hogans used by the Navajos during that period."[5] Fray Zamora was placed in charge of Christianizing the Taos area.

In general, the Spanish extended their claim over an area which stretched from Taos to El Paso and from the Hopi villages on the west to the Pecos River, a distance of about 250 miles. The entire claim covered approximately 87,000 square miles.[6]

As the New Mexico colony of Oñate was merely an extension of the older and more settled area of Mexico, both the economic and cultural ways of Mexico were quickly transferred to the infant colony. For the church, represented by the Franciscan friars, this meant the building of churches through which the Indians would be converted to Christianity and taught the virtures of the Spanish culture. For the civil government and the Spanish settlers, it meant in part the establishment of the encomienda and repartimientos which had become such a vital economic force in earlier Spanish colonies in the New World.

The encomienda system had first been established by royal decree with church approval in the year 1509. The first encomiendas were given as rewards to discoverers and conquerors for services rendered to the Spanish crown, while later encomiendas were awarded to those Spanish settlers who were deemed loyal and well deserving by the Spanish monarch and the governors who acted as his representatives.

In theory,the encomienda was supposed to be both an economic and religious system. In return for the labor and tribute of the Indians, the overlord of the encomienda was "commended" to

care for and protect the Indians, educating them in both "spiritual and temporal matters." Unfortunately, as a result of careless administration, serious abuses were soon heaped upon the Indians and a situation was created which became the same thing as slave labor.[7]

The treatment and type of tribute paid by the Indians, whether in money, goods, labor or personal services,were constantly regulated by royal decrees. These decrees generally proved to be ineffective in correcting abuses against the Indians because of the long distance from Spain and the established pattern of the encomiendas which were hard to change or control. As a result, the Indians were greatly misused. Their treatment was harsh, with the tributes exacted sometimes causing extreme hardships, poverty and even death from starvation. In general, while the encomienda and repartimiento systems provided the labor and economic basis for Spanish wealth in the New World, their overall effects on the Indians were devastating and succeeded in reducing the ranks of the Native Americans in some colonies to a mere handful in comparison to their numbers before the coming of the Spaniards.

By 1537, treatment of the Indians under the two systems had grown so abusive that the church began a campaign to stop the spread of them to future areas of Spanish colonization. The Indians, the church maintained, should be brought within the Christian faith by peaceful means, not enslaved for the economic benefit of Spanish overlords. Ideally, the royal decrees ending abuses should have corrected the problems, but economic reality on which the colonies existed prevailed and the decrees were usually ignored. The New Mexico colony would prove to be no different from others where the Indians were exploited.

"At first the New Mexico Pueblos voluntarily shared their produce with the Spaniards and the settlers at San Juan soon put in irrigation ditches and crops, probably using the Indians to do most of the physical work. The crops produced however, did not meet all the needs of the Spaniards and Oñate began to impose levies of corn and other products upon the scattered pueblos, sending soldiers to enforce the collections."[8]

Later, as the Pueblos grew more and more hesitant in giving their produce to the Spaniards, Oñate placed the pueblos under the encomienda system. Now, heads of Indian households were required to pay a yearly tribute in corn and blankets to the Spanish. This forced tribute eventually became fixed by tradition at one Spanish

Pueblo Indian giving blankets and corn to the Spanish landlord.
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

bushel of corn and one small blanket.[9]

Because most Spanish colonists felt it was beneath their dignity to physically work in the fields, especially when the Indians represented a more than plentiful labor force, Oñate placed the repartimiento system into effect in the colony. Now the Indians were forced to work the Spaniards' fields and tend their livestock.

It was the governor's duty to assign the Indian laborers to the colonists, up to one hundred workers from the different pueblos. These Indian workers were supposedly paid a daily wage and were to receive rations. "The New Mexico repartimiento cloaked a host of abuses. Wages and rations weren't always paid or provided and the laborers had to work longer than the law allowed. The colonists also forced the Indians to work at times when their own harvesting needed to be done, thus causing hardships for the Indians whose crops were desperately needed during the winter months. In addition to the abuses against the Indian laborers, many Spanish soldiers and settlers also offended the Indian women. These abuses caused the hatred and resentment against the Spanish to grow greater and greater as each year passed."[10]

During the period of establishing a settlement at San Juan, Oñate directed small expeditions to explore the country. One party,

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under the command of Captain Vicente de Zaldivar, with sixty men, traveled eastward through Pecos to the Buffalo Plains. Another group, commanded by Oñate, went southward to the Pueblos near present-day Bernalillo and then westward to Acoma, Zuni and the Hopi villages. At the Hopi towns, Oñate dispatched a squad of soldiers under Captain Marcos Farfan de los Godos to go further west across present-day Arizona where they found an old Indian mine near the Big Sandy River and claims were staked out.[11]

During this time, Juan de Zaldivar left San Juan to overtake Oñate with reinforcements. When the party arrived at Acoma, they sought provisions, but met only hostility. Juan Zaldivar and twelve of his men were killed and the few survivors managed to meet up with Oñate and the whole party returned to San Juan.[12]

The death of his brother led Vicente Zaldivar to seek revenge. Heading a force of seventy men, Vicente attacked Acoma and destroyed it. The Spaniards captured about seventy-five men and five hundred women and children and took them to San Juan where they were tried for rebellion against Spanish royal authority. Severe penalities were exacted with all the captive men over the age of 25 having one foot cut off and being sentenced to serve a twenty year period of service to the Spaniards. Women and children were placed under the supervision of Spanish officials, which practically amounted to slavery. Two Hopis taken at Acoma had their right hands cut off. They were then sent home to warn their people about what would happen if they revolted in any way. As a result of this harsh warning, no uprising against Spanish authority occurred for 80 years.

The survivors of the Acoma disaster rebuilt their homes, not on the mesa, but at the foot of the cliffs and it was not until 1680 that the old mesa-top site was again reoccupied.[13]

Sometime during the winter or spring of 1599, a new site was chosen for the little colony of San Juan. The place selected was across the Rio Grande at the Pueblo of Yunque. Here the Yunque inhabitants were forced to move out and were merged with the Pueblo at San Juan. The new colony and capital were christened San Gabriel del Yunque.[14]

The next year in the summer of 1600, the small colony received reinforcements when seventy-three more colonists and seven additional friars arrived at San Gabriel. Now the Quivira tales of wealth began to draw Oñate's attention and in June of 1601, he journeyed with seventy men across the Pecos River to the Buffalo Plains. No

wealth was found and the expedition turned back. But they did bring glowing reports of the fertility of the country.[15]

In November 1601 when Oñate returned to San Gabriel, he discovered that most of the colonists and a few of the friars had deserted the infant colony and returned to Mexico. When the unhappy colonists arrived back in New Spain, they reported that the colonizing effort was a total failure. The soil, they reported, was too infertile for successful agriculture and the colonists faced possible future starvation. Also, the report stated, only a few Indians had sucessfully been converted to Christianity.

Those colonists who had remained faithful to the little colony soon wrote countercharges but the colonizing effort had already been placed in danger of being abandoned. Oñate, in an attempt to save the colony, sent Vicente de Zaldivar to Spain to appeal to the Council of the Indies for three hundred more colonists rather than closing down the entire project.

These charges and countercharges were deliberated by the King and the Council of the Indies, and on June 6, 1606, a tentative decision was reached. Oñate was to be recalled, his army was to be broken up and a full investigation into his leadership of the expedition was to be made.[16]

As a result of the Council's decision, Oñate resigned his post on August 24, 1607 while the Audencia Council of New Spain deliberated about abandoning the entire colonization project. The point around which the deliberations revolved was whether to abandon those Indians that had been converted to Christianity. If they were abandoned, they would soon revert back to their old religion. During this deliberation, Fray Lazaro Ximinez arrived from New Mexico with a report which claimed that at least seven thousand Indians had been converted. This swayed the Council and the Viceroy recommended that the colony be changed from a private enterprise to that of a royal colony, with a governor who was supported by soldiers. The recommendation also included the idea of a missionary field that would be maintained at government expense.[17]

In this way, the colonizing effort that had earlier been privately financed and carried out, although government-controlled, now became totally controlled and operated by the government.[18]

Now that the colonizing effort in the New Mexico Province was to be guided and financed by the government, the success of future colonizing efforts was more assured. Still, however, there remained

the very expensive task of starting new colonies and the extremely difficult job of protecting the little colonies from attacks by unfriendly Indian groups, many of whom were on the fringe areas of lands explored by the Spanish and about which very little was known.

Although Coronado's expedition had ushered in the historic period of New Mexican history, official records concerning those Indians located within the Spanish province of New Mexico are fragmented. Enough exist, however, to reveal the Spanish attitude toward the Indians, especially in their lack of attempts to distinguish between the different groups of Indians they came into contact with. Because the Spanish came into an area where there were many Indian groups, they saw them only as possibly hostile barbarians who all looked alike. The Spanish were probably able to distinguish between the Pueblo groups because they lived in permanent dwellings which the Spaniards could relate to. The nomadic tribes and those on the fringe areas however were generally lumped together under one term, that of "Querecho", an all encompassing term meaning wanderer as opposed to settled farmer.[19]

Because they were easier to identify and relate to, the Pueblo groups were identified in the early period of Spanish exploration and colonization as: The Zunian group which consisted of three Pueblos in the extreme western part of New Mexico with an approximate total population of 2,500 people. The other two groups were located in the Rio Grande Valley. Of these, the Tanoan was the larger group and included the five tribes of the Piros, Tiguas, Tanos, Jemez and Tewas. In the west, the Acoma Pueblo was part of this family, while the remainder occupied the region north of where the Rio Jemez joins the Rio Grande and were commonly known as the Queres Nation. Language ties meant nothing and each of the Pueblos acted on its own, seldom finding a common cause with the other tribes.[20]

In the late 1590's when the Spanish had become more familiar with the new lands and their non-pueblo inhabitants, other all-inclusive terms such as Apache and Vaquero replaced that of Querechos. The term Vaquero was applied to the plains Indians but by 1600, the term Apache was also used for these Indians.[21]

Later, the Spanish realized that although the Apaches appeared to be one group, they were in fact different and were recognized by either their location or by some distinguishing characteristic. The Jicarilla or Basket Maker Apaches made their homes in northeastern

New Mexico. The Mescalero, or Mescal-eating Apaches were at first known as the Natages or Faraones and wandered as various bands across the eastern side of the New Mexico Province. In southwestern New Mexico were those Apaches who were referred to as the Faraones, Salineros, Mescalero and later the Gilas or Gilenos. Those Indians referred to as the Apaches of Navajo inhabited the northwest area of New Mexico from the San Juan River to the Cebolleta Mountain area.[22]

Some confusion has resulted from early Spanish terms used in referring to the wild and warlike tribes. The term Apache probably came from the Zuni word Apachu, meaning enemy which was the Zuni name for the Navajo. The Spanish tended to use the word Apache to denote any hostile Indians and Oñate used it to refer to the people of Acoma Pueblo.[23]

The Navajos were not mentioned by the early Spaniards as a separate and distinct group. This was probably the result of the routes taken by the early conquistadores such as Coronado who did not venture into the areas north of the Rio Grande pueblos.[24]

The name Apache was later used by the Spanish for only the Southern Athabascans when it was realized that most of the Indian tribes in and around New Mexico spoke a common language. As time passed, the Spaniards eventually gave other names to the Athabascan tribes in different areas, with the Navajos becoming known as the Apaches de Navajo,[25] Navajo Apaches, Navajo or some variation of these.[26]

During this period, fragmented Spanish documents also indicate that the small settlement of San Gabriel and the encomiendas held by the Spaniards were subject to repeated Indian attacks between 1606 and 1609. The Navajos are believed to have participated in these raids or at least were instrumental in their formation. One account shows that the encomienda of Jemez Indians granted to Martinez de Montoya in 1606 was subject to repeated livestock raids. Because this encomienda was located on the edge of Navajo Country, it is assumed that the Navajos were the raiders. Montoya led several campaigns against the livestock raiders,who later extended their raids beyond the Jemez area.

In 1608, the Apaches-Navajo attacked San Gabriel itself, bringing about a retaliatory campaign led by Martinez de Montoya and Cristobal Oñate, the son of Juan de Oñate. That same year, the Viceroy, Don Luis de Velasco, ordered the governor of New Mexico to send out patrols to end these raids and protect the Christian

(friendly) Indians.[27]

In the years between 1606 and 1609, the Spanish leadership of the small New Mexico colony appeared in question. Following the resignation of Juan de Oñate as governor, the Viceroy appointed Martinez de Montoya as acting governor in February 1608. The Cabildo or council of San Gabriel refused however to accept this appointment and named Cristobal Oñate to the governorship. The Viceroy accepted this act, but on March 30, 1609, Don Pedro de Peralta was officially appointed as governor of New Mexico.[28]

Viceroy Velasco instructed Peralta when he received his appointment as governor to reorganize the defenses of the Province because:

> *"Some villages and tribes are on the frontiers and lands of the Apaches (Navajos) who are the protectors of hosts of enemies and among whom are the planners and plotters against the entire country and from which they issue to do damage and make war."*[29]

During the time of Oñate's leadership of the colony, several complaints had reached the Viceroy of his failure to settle the Apache and Navajo menace. These complaints led the Viceroy to view the Indian problem in a different light. Was it possible that the Spanish had been too harsh and aggressive with those Indian groups outside the pueblo area? With this question in mind, the Viceroy issued orders to reduce further expeditions to punish these Indians for wrongs they had committed. This order however was quickly cancelled when pressure was brought from the church, which explained to the Viceroy that "the Spaniards and Christian Indians were regularly harassed by the Apaches (Navajos), who destroyed and burned the pueblos, waylaid and killed the natives, and stole the horses of the Spaniards".[30]

Some of the hostility shown by the Apaches and Navajos may have been the result of Pueblo peoples fleeing to join these fringe groups and agitating for raids against their former Spanish conquerors. The fact that the Navajo Country acted as a place of refuge to discontented Pueblo Indians is understandable. As the restrictions and abusive treatment of the Pueblos under the encomienda system grew, many Pueblos, remembering the freedom of earlier times and resenting the attempts of missionaries to convert them to Christianity, as well as the superior attitudes of the Spaniards, slipped away

and fled to join other Indian groups, including the Navajos, which were outside of Spanish control.

In order to lessen the effects of Indian raids, the Viceroy instructed Governor Peralta to strengthen the defenses of the colony. Following the Viceroy's instructions, Governor Peralta, in the winter and spring of 1609-1610, officially moved the capital from San Gabriel to the treeless rolling foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains some thirty miles away.[31] The new capital was officially named La Villa Real de la Santa Fe de San Francisco (Royal City of the Holy Faith of Saint Francis), which was soon shortened to Santa Fe. Thus came into existence the oldest continually inhabited capital city in the United States.*

* An exception to this statement might be considered for the Pueblo Rebellion period, 1680-1692.

Footnotes

1. George Peter Hammond, trans. Onate's Appointment as Governor of New Mexico, *New Mexico Historical Review, Vol. XIII*, No. 3, (July 1938), pp. 241-248.
2. Edward H. Spicer, *Cycles of Conquest* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1962), p. 156.
3. Raymond Friday Locke, *The Book of the Navajo* (Los Angeles: Mankind Publishing Co., 1976), p. 156.
4. Lynn Perrigo, *Our Spanish Southwest* (Dallas: Banks Upshaw and Co., 1960), pp. 35-37.
5. Spicer, *loc. cit.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. Lynn R. Bailey, *Indian Slave Trade in the Southwest* (Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1966), p. xii.
8. Marc Simmons, *New Mexico* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1977), pp. 54-55.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
11. Perrigo, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.
17. Jack D. Forbes, *Apache, Navaho and Spaniard* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), p. 112.
18. Perrigo, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
19. Charles Avery Amsden, Navajo Origins, *New Mexico Historical Review, Vol. VII*, No.3, (July 1932), p. 194.
20. Warren Beck, *New Mexico, A History of Four Centuries* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), p. 24.
21. Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

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22. Frank D. Reeve, Seventeenth Century Navaho-Spanish Relations, *New Mexico Historical Review, Vol. XXXII*, No. 1, (January 1959), p. 36.

23. J. Lee Correll, *Through White Men's Eyes: A Contribution to Navajo History*, Vol. I (Window Rock, Arizona: The Navajo Times Publishing Co., 1976), p. 2.

24. Amsden, *loc. cit.*

25. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

26. Norman M. Littell, *Proposed Findings of Fact in Behalf of the Navajo Tribe of Indians In Area of the Overall Navajo Claim* (Dockett 229), Vol. I (Mimeographed) Window Rock, Arizona: The Navajo Tribe, 1967), p. 9.

27. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

28. Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

29. Correll, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

30. Reeve, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.

31. Frank McNitt, *Navajo Wars* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1972), p. 11.

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Chapter 7

THE NAVAJOS AND THE MISSIONARIES

The period between 1610 and 1621 remains somewhat of a mystery as to the full activities of the Navajos. We may however, from the Spanish records which have survived, infer that the Navajos and their allies were generally on hostile terms with the Spanish and those Pueblo peoples who had been converted to Christianity.[1]

A great number of the Spanish documents from this period continued to refer to the Navajos as Apaches. These references make it difficult to pinpoint all Navajo activities. The use of the term Apache in reference to the Navajos tends to leave somewhat of a false impression about the Navajos. It is hard to believe that the Navajos were not generally involved in almost all happenings within the Rio Grande area. It is felt that the Navajos probably helped the Zunis against Coronado and also the Pueblos in their resistance against their Spanish masters.[2] With this past record of action against the Spanish, and the fact that the Navajos were on the fringe areas, close to the Jemez and lower Rio Grande Pueblos where the greatest Spanish activity was taking place, it is logical that the Navajos were involved in almost all Indian attempts to resist the Spaniards.

This idea is further strengthened by the occurrence in the spring of 1614 when "Fray Francisco Perez Guerta reported . . . 'that . . some Jemez Indians with some Apaches (Navajos?) killed an Indian of Cochiti Pueblo. Several of the Jemez captains were brought to Santo Domingo (Pueblo), and there one man was hanged . . .' ".[3] Later it has been noted, "during the first quarter of the seventeenth century, the Navajo-Apaches raided the Pueblo of Santa Clara and made war upon them. In 1622, the Jemez villages of Giusewa and Patoqua were abandoned because of Navajo raids, and the people scattered."[4]

While conflicts often occurred between neighboring tribes, such as the Navajo and the Jemez Pueblos, periods of peace in which the warring groups allied themselves together against a common enemy were frequent. This appears to be the situation with the Navajos and the Jemez during the period between 1623 and 1626. During this time, the Jemez were at war with the Spaniards and the Catholic Tewas, with both the Spaniards and the Christian Pueblos being the

target of frequent Navajo raids, it is logical to assume that the Jemez and the Navajos were allies against a common enemy during this period.[5]

Although the Spanish had long recognized that hostile nomadic Indians occupied the northwestern section of New Mexico, it was not until the 1620's that they became conscious of the Navajos as a separate part of the vast general category of Athabaskan Indians they had been referring to as Querechos, Cocoyes, or Apaches. "The first Spanish reference to Navajos that is recorded was made by Fray Geronimo de Zarate-Salmeron who went to Jemez as a missionary in 1622 and established the Mission of San Jose at the Pueblo of Giusewa".[6]

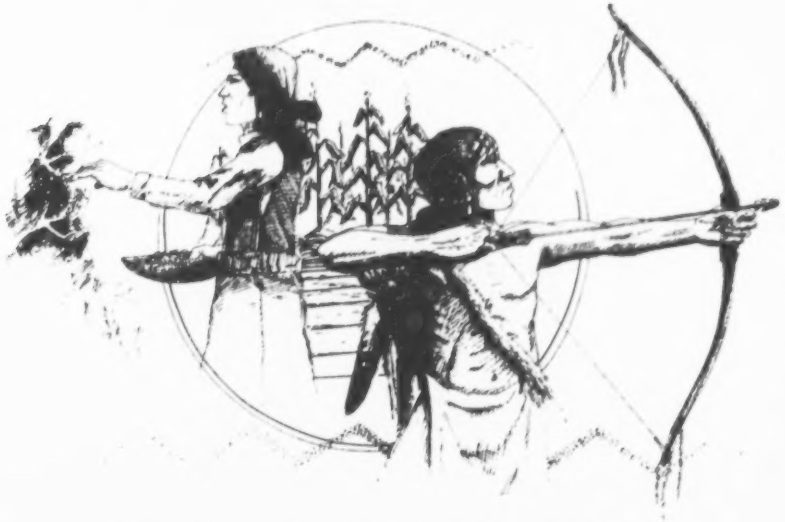
Salmaron, in his history of the Spanish in California and New Mexico between 1538 and 1626, gives an account of the early Navajos as related by the Jemez Indians:

> *"When I said to these Hemez (Jemez) that if there were guides I would gladly go to discover this nation . . . they replied that . . one had only to go out by way of the river Zama (Chama) and that past the nation of the Apache Indians of Navahu (Navajo) there is a great river (this was the upper course of the Colorado or Buena Esperanza). . . and that the river suffices for a guide. And that all was plain with good grasses and fields between the north and northwest; that it was fertile land, good and level and there are many nations-the province of Quazulas-the Qusutas (Utes) and further inland another nation settled."*[7]

The description given by Salmeron indicates that the Navajos were definitely located between the Chama and the San Juan Rivers, and south of the Utes with whom the Navajos fought and traded for centuries. This location has been verified by modern archaeological evidence which shows that the Navajos lived in northwestern New Mexico from Cebolleta Mountain to what the Spanish referred to as the Province of Navajo.[8]

During this period, it has been determined that the Navajos were dwelling in earth-covered houses and were growing crops of corn,

beans, squash, and other Southwestern products. They also gathered wild foods and hunted widely. They engaged in extensive trade with other Indians and the Spanish settlers and were holding large gatherings where dances were performed.[9]



Navajos grew crops, gathered wild seeds and hunted for animals.
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

"By 1627, the Franciscans had become interested in converting the Navajos to Christianity and under the direction of Father Alonso de Benavides, the Custodian of the Missions of New Mexico and a mission was opened at the Tewa village of Santa Clara."[10]

Benavides' Observation on the Navajo

In 1630, Benavides wrote a memorial to report to the King of Spain in which he described the Apaches or Navajos. Benavides indicated that the term, "Navajo"came from a Tewa word which meant "Great Planted Fields". These same Navajos, Benavides wrote, were basically a settled agricultural people, but when occasion warranted it, they could also be the most warlike of the Apache Nation. At this point in his report, Benavides greatly exaggerated the Navajo population by stating that on one occasion the Navajos had gathered together thirty thousand warriors. Even

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though this was an exaggeration, the fact that the Navajos were a constant menace to the Spaniards' well being is constantly told and retold in Spanish documents of that time.

"Fray Benavides described the "Apaches de Navajo" in the 1600's as a tribe that he met a little more than a day's journey west or northwest of Santa Clara Pueblo." They were, Benavides reports:

> *". . .thought to be a very numerous people - reportedly assembling 200,000 warriors on one occasion - and very skillful farmers. Nevertheless, in spite of being a more sedentary people than the other Apaches, they were considered to be 'the most warlike of the entire Apache Nation' ".*[11]

While the number of Navajos referred to by Benavides is an obvious exaggeration, his reference to the Apaches (probably the Navajos) as being "the crucible of Spanish valor"[12] was more than factual.

In addition to the other information contained in Benavides' report, he also placed the Navajo area as extending across almost all of northern New Mexico and as far west as the Hopi villages.

Out of this northern area the Navajos, during Benavides'stay in New Mexico, rode to war against the Tewa Indians. These Navajo raids could not be controlled by the Spanish, but Benavides believed that the fighting was not entirely the Navajos' fault. Within the Navajo Country were mountain ranges which contained deposits of alum (lumbre) which was used by the Pueblo Indian as a mordant (used to fix colors in dying cloth) in painting their clothing. Because the Navajo Country was the only place near the Pueblo where alum was found, they repeatedly invaded the Navajo domain to get this highly desired material.[13]

In response to these invasions, the Navajo fought "in defense of their country". This action led to attacks on the Tewas which in turn brought Spanish retaliation against the Navajos.[14]

The Spaniards launched repeated forays into the Navajo Country. "The Spaniards' method of dealing with the Navajos had been to enter the Indian's territory secretly and attack a village without warning at daybreak. This policy failed to accomplish much",[15] because the methods employed by the Navajo Tribe to meet the threat of attack were concealment and fortifications[16] and they were always able to assemble many warriors to meet the

onslaught and they frequently made counterattacks.

Rather than repeat the methods used by other Spaniards in his dealings with the Navajos, Fray Benavides chose to try a policy of peace. Traveling to the Tewa Pueblo and to Santa Clara, Benavides persuaded these two Pueblos, which had suffered from repeated Navajo raids, to send a twelve man peace mission to meet with the Navajos. The Navajos, who had been preparing for war, accepted the peace mission and abandoned their war plans. The new truce was apparently successful and peaceful relations seemingly continued into the period of the early 1630's.[17]

The first opportunity to convert the Navajos to Christianity occurred after Benavides' arrival in New Mexico in 1625. This opportunity came when it was learned that one of the Navajo captains named Quinia was suffering from an arrow wound. Fray Pedro de Ortega, a missionary in Santa Fe, and Fray Geronimo de Pedraza, a trained surgeon and apothecary (early pharmacist), went into the Navajo Country to treat the wounded man.

Later, in 1627, probably appreciative of the help, or possibly intrigued by the religious ideas put forth by the priests, Captain Quinia came to the Rio Grande Valley asking for baptism. The next year, both Quinia and a fellow chieftain, Manases, were baptized.

Quinia and Manases being baptized. (drawing by O. C. Joe)

This acceptance of the Christian religion, whether understood or even taken seriously by these two Navajo chieftains, opened the door, at least part way, to opening missions within the Navajo area. In the spring of 1629, the work of starting a mission among the Navajo began. Two friars, Fray Bartolome' Romero and Fray Francisco Munos were escorted into the Navajo lands by not only the Navajo Quinia, but also by Governor Francisco Silva (1629-1632) and a detachment of soldiers.[18]

The missionary work began immediately. A log church was quickly built in one day, with plastered outside walls. With this task completed, the Spanish left the Navajo region, leaving Fray

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Bartolome' to carry on the missionary work among the Navajos. The Navajos, while at first probably greatly interested in this new and strange religion, soon became restless and tried to kill Fray Bartolome' before they abandoned the mission area and moved off to other haunts.

Fray Benavides next attempted to save the mission project by sending a peace delegation to solve the problem and get the mission accepted by the Navajos. The peace delegation met with success and a group of Navajos came to Santa Clara for a conference.

Later (probably after this meeting), Fray Martin de Arvide entered the Province of Navajo. For the most part, however, Spanish missionary efforts dealt primarily with the Pueblo peoples, but involved the Navajos in a roundabout way. When many of the Pueblos could no longer endure the strange and sometimes rigid control of the Spaniards and the mission priests, they fled to those Indians who lived on the fringe areas of Spanish controlled lands, including the Navajo Country. These Pueblos would have certainly informed the Navajos of the condition of the Pueblos and their Spanish masters, making the Navajos more than hesitant to deal with the Spaniards, lest they suffer the same fate as the Pueblos.

Also, those Pueblos who had accepted Christianity were probably lumped together with their Spanish overlords in the eyes of the Navajo people, who came into contact with both groups. This, together with the fact that Spaniards used Pueblo men to fill in their army ranks while on military expeditions, and the Spanish habit of seizing Navajo boys and girls for use as household servants or to sell as slaves in Mexico, certainly did not make the Spanish missionaries acceptable to the Navajo people.[19]

Footnotes

1. Jack D. Forbes, *Apache, Navaho and Spaniard* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), p. 113.

2. J. Lee Correll, *Through White Men's Eyes: A Contribution to Navajo History*, Vol. I (Window Rock, Arizona: The Navajo Times Publishing Co., 1976), p. 3.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

6. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

7. Charles Avery Amsden, Navajo Origins, *New Mexico Historical Review, Vol. VII*, No.3. (July 1932), p. 200.

8. Frank D. Reeve, Seventeenth Century Navaho-Spanish Relations, *New Mexico Historical Review, Vol. XXXII*, No. 1, (January 1957), p. 36.

9. Bertha Pauline Dutton, *Navahos and Apaches: The Athabascans* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1976), p. 7.

10. Edward H. Spicer, *Cycles of Conquest* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1962), p. 211.

11. Albert H. Schroeder, *Navaho and Apache Relationships West of the Rio Grande*, El Palacio. Vol. 70, (Fall 1963), pp. 123-124.

12. Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

13. Frank D. Reeve, Early Navaho Geography, *New Mexico Historical Review, Vol. XXXI*, No. 4, (October 1956), pp. 290-291.

14. Forbes, *loc. cit.*

15. *Ibid.*

16. Norman M. Littell, *Proposed Findings of Fact in Behalf of the Navajo Tribe of Indians In Area of the Overall Navajo Claim*, (Dockett 229), Vol. I, (mineographed). (Window Rock, Arizona: The Navajo Tribe, 1967), p. 103.

17. Forbes, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-125.

18. Reeve, *Seventeenth Century Navaho-Spanish Relations*, op. cit., pp. 40-41.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.

Chapter 8

THE CONFLICT BEGINS

No campaigns against the Navajos appear to have taken place between 1629 and 1638. It is known, however, that the Spanish forces were few in number and poorly equipped. Spanish reports show that in 1630, a campaign against the Navajos was not possible because of the shortage of horseshoes and the roughness of the mountainous country where the Navajos were to be found would be deadly for horses not properly shoed. Even the Spanish valor would not permit them to take a chance of having their horses lamed and ending up afoot in the Navajo Country.

"During the 1630's the continued Navajo depredations against the Pueblos and Spanish settlements became a matter of grave concern in the Province of New Mexico, and by 1638, the friars in the frontier pueblos reported that they and their charges were subject to constant Apache (Navajo) attacks."[1]

"In 1637, Luis de Rosas was appointed governor of New Mexico. Rosas' term of office proved to be one of difficulty and ultimate tragedy for both the Spaniards and the Indians. Obviously a man of few scruples, de Rosas seemed to be obsessed with the idea of 'getting rich quick'."[2]

The quickest way of getting rich in the New Mexico province at that time was through the slave trade. Rosas quickly began to engage in this practice and within the same year he took office had managed to make the Apaches even more hostile than ever. It appears that the Navajos were not the main victims of these slave raids, but may have been engaged in providing Rosas with Indian slaves taken from other tribes, a practice which was quite common for the times. This theory may have some foundation based on the fact that the governor started campaigns against the Utes, who had generally been Spanish allies but traditional enemies of the Navajos. One such expedition led by Rosas in the Ute Country resulted in a number of Utes being killed and eighty Ute captives being taken and later sold into slavery in Mexico, along with some Apaches.[3]

Governor Rosas also caused a tragic split between the Spaniards in New Mexico. Two factions soon developed, that of the colonists who were loyal to the governor and the Franciscan friars who were opposed to the governor's practices. The friars were charged with

being the owners of all the wealth in New Mexico and with using their religious powers to keep control of both the Spaniards and Indians in the province.[4]

As a result of these charges and others, the conflict widened between the Franciscan friars who sought to control the lives and labor of the subjugated Indians and the governor who wanted to increase his own personal wealth by using these same Indians for his own gain.

Governor Rosas further widened the split when he visited the Pecos Pueblos and demanded that the Indians weave blankets for him which he planned to trade to the Apaches for buffalo hides and meat. This project failed and the friars were blamed, with one Pecos friar being arrested and taken to Santa Fe.[5]

The Governor than ordered the Indians not to obey the priests and told the Pecos Indians they could again hold their traditional dances if more blankets and hides were delivered to him.

The feud between church and state became complete when Rosas removed a priest and appointed another who was friendlier to his efforts and beat two priests who came to Santa Fe to try and patch up the quarrel.

The feud continued as missions were desecrated by the governor's forces and as the Indians watched the power of the Spaniards erode away, even the Franciscan friars took up arms to attack the governor's ranch.

While the Spaniards were busy fighting among themselves, the powerful control they once held on the New Mexico province began to slip slowly away.[6] The Navajos took advantage of the situation and raided the Spanish settlements and Rio Grande pueblos at will.

No campaign against the Navajos took place during this period and they drove off horses from the missions, killed many mission Indians and, in February 1639, killed Fray Diego de San Lucas of the Jemez Pueblo mission.[7]

In the summer of 1641, Rosas was replaced by Juan Flores de Sierra y Valdes, who died shortly thereafter and the Franciscan element seemed to have gained control of Santa Fe. Rosas was imprisoned and was murdered by a jealous husband, a situation possibly contrived by the Franciscans.

Late in 1642, the rule of the Franciscans in Santa Fe was ended by the arrival of a new governor, Alonso Pacheco de Heredia. The new governor inherited several problems, two of which were the

Navajos and the Franciscan feud.

Beginning about 1640,the Navajos and the Pueblos had time and again entered into conspiracies to try and overthrow the Spaniards. Working together, the Pueblos would oftentimes turn over entire horse herds to their Navajo allies, and the hostility of the Navajos made it difficult for the Spanish to travel to the distant Zuni and Hopi Pueblos in order to bring these people under Spanish control. The Navajos were further angered by the Spaniards who continually sent out expeditions to seize Navajo captives to sell as slaves in the markets at Santa Fe and Mexico.[8]

The Franciscans were still strong during the governorship of Pacheco. Although he was not definitely siding with this faction, he did little to make them mad until he had gained full control over the situation in New Mexico. The friars themselves undertook several campaigns against the Navajos during late 1641 and early 1642. The Spanish managed to burn 20,000 fanegas* of maize and took many prisoners. Several Navajos were killed but the friars refused to stop their campaigns until the Navajos sued for peace. The Navajos were finally forced into accepting a truce with the Spanish, but the peace period proved to be short-lived.[9] The Navajo campaigns carried out by the Franciscan friars caused Governor Pacheco to warmly praise the church for their cooperation in the campaigns, especially the lending of horses to the fighting men who undertook the expeditions into Navajo Country.[10]

The unrest and attempts at rebellion against the Spanish during the period between 1644 and 1650 was widespread across the Spanish-controled areas of Sonora in northern Mexico and the Province of New Mexico. The rebellion in Nueva Vizcaya had a distinct effect upon the Indians in New Mexico where the hate and resentment against the Spaniards had been building for over fifty years.

Hostilities between the Navajos and the Spanish continued and in 1645, the Jemez Pueblo and the Navajos made peace. The two tribes then began to conspire to drive the Spaniards from the country. The plot was soon discovered and Governor Fernando de Argüello, who had taken control in December 1644, had twenty-nine of the Jemez Indians hanged at Jemez Pueblo because they were associates of the Navajos and were considered now to be traitors. Others were whipped and imprisoned for the same charges and for

* Spanish unit of measure, about 1-6 bushels.

having killed a Spaniard, Diego Martinez Naranjo.[11] Now, under the governorship of Argüello, the Rio Grande Pueblos were once more firmly placed under the religious control of the Franciscans and the governor had more than forty Indians imprisoned, lashed or hanged for refusing to accept the Christian religion which the friars forced upon the Pueblos.[12]

Little is known about New Mexico from 1647 to 1649, when Luis de Guzmán was governor. However, Spanish campaigns into the Navajo Country known as the Rio Grande, Navajo y Casa Furete, were made during his term as governor. It is assumed that the fighting was carried on with the Navajos as the places mentioned were all within their territory, the San Juan River Area[13] which was called the Rio Grande de Navajo by the Spaniards. The area referred to as Casa Furete (strong house), may have been the fortified mesa tops where the Navajos generally lived during this period.

The next governor, Hernando de Ugarte y la Concha (1649-1653) was also faced with a conspiracy between the Pueblos and the Navajos. The conspiracy was revealed by Navajos who had taken a herd of mares. When they were overtaken by Captain Alonso Baca, they told him that the Indians of the Pueblos of Alameda and Sandia had delivered the stock to them as part of an alliance bargain between the two groups. The governor then proceeded to hang nine of the leaders from the Pueblos of Isleta, Alameda, San Felipe, Cochiti and Jemez.[14]

Indian-Spanish problems in New Mexico did not improve when the next governor, Juan de Samaniego y Xaca (Jaca) took control of the Province in 1653. Then some Navajos ambushed the Jemez Pueblo and killed nineteen people and took thirty-five captives. A retaliatory expedition led by Don Juan Dominquez de Mendoza went in pursuit of the raiders. Mendoza surprised the Navajos during a native ceremonial and killed several of the Navajos. Two hundred and eleven Navajos were imprisoned and thirty-five captives that were being held by the Dine' were released, including a Spanish woman. Nothing is known of the fate of the Navajo prisoners, but they were probably divided as booty among the soldiers as this was the usual custom following punitive expeditions against the Indians. Navajo and Apache slaves were always in demand and large numbers of them were sold during the 1650's. This practice invariably added to the ever-increasing hostility of the Apaches and Navajos toward the Spaniards.[15]

Because the Navajos were not a unified people and would not

become so until the Twentieth Century, the many small bands each operated in their own way. Some bands raided the Pueblos while others remained at peace with the Pueblo under attack. This placed the Pueblos, especially the Jemez Pueblo, in an unhappy situation. One moment they were hanged by the Spanish for being allies of the Navajos and the next moment they were under attack from their sometimes friends, the Dine'.[16]

Early in the summer of 1659, Governor Bernardo Lopez de Mendizabal arrived in New Mexico and immediately began to show an interest in the slave trade. Mendizabal then sent a detachment of soldiers into the Navajo Country where they captured two Indians. After questioning the two, it was learned that the Navajos were planning some long term raids on the Pueblos. Later, in September, Governor Lopez sent a campaign under the command of Captain Juan Dominquez de Mendoza against the Navajos along the Rio Grande de Navajo (San Juan River) in order to destroy their fields. The expedition was made up of forty Spaniards with eight hundred Christian Indians and as a result of this large force, many Navajos were killed and many more were captured.[17]

It is not known at the present time as to just when the Pueblos were forced into helping the Spanish on their campaigns against other Indian groups in the Southwest. Equally unknown are the circumstances which made the Pueblos agreeable to such actions. In questioning the fact that the Pueblos were used to help the Spanish, Fray Juan Rameriz implied that the campaign of 1659 against the Navajos was not the first time that Pueblo auxiliaries had been used in war as allies of the Spanish. It is quite possible that the Pueblos were not eager volunteers on these raids, but as the grip of the Spanish over all phases of Pueblo life became stronger and stronger each year, the Pueblos probably had little choice and dared not refuse the demands of their conquerors. At times however, it was probably not necessary to demand that the Pueblos participate in the expeditions since Navajo raids upon the Pueblos of the Rio Grande area often caused great damage and made the Pueblos anxious to retaliate against their sometimes allies and oftentimes enemies.[18]

In 1660, Governor Mendizabal sent another group of captive Navajos and Apaches to Sonora, Mexico where they were sold for 1200 pesos. This traffic in Indian slaves was brought to an end however by an order of the Audiencia (Council) of Guadalajara and the captives were freed and the 1200 pesos were returned to the purchasers.[19] The order by the Audiencia did not entirely end the

practice of taking Indians captive and selling them as slaves however, it only tended to drive the evil practice underground or make the ever resourceful slave traders seek other ways of selling their helpless captives.

About this time, it became clear that a more effective means of defense against the Navajos and Apaches was needed.[20] As a result of this realization, the New Mexico Province was divided into two administrative units, the Rio Abajo or down-river area and the Rio Arriba or up-river area which was to be administered by Santa Fe. The Rio Abajo, appeared to be the section which needed the most defensive work as it was the area which most frequently felt the stinging attacks from the Apaches. Juan Dominquez de Mendoza was appointed Alcalde Mayor for the jurisdiction of Sandia and Isleta Pueblos, and Lieutenant General for the larger region extending from Cochiti Pueblo on the north to the Pueblo of Senecu on the south and eastward to the Pueblos of the Salinas district which lay southeast from the Manzano Mountains. This area covered all or part of what was then called the Rio Abajo.[21]

The new administrative changes were also accompanied by a new policy regarding the frontier Indians, especially the Navajos. Navajo trading parties were to be restricted to not passing beyond the Salinas area. This pact, made with the Navajos in May 1663, was designed to keep them out of the Spanish settlements and Pueblos as much as possible, thus avoiding any situations which could lead to serious problems.

By 1662, the actions of Governor Mendizabal caused him to be arrested by the Inquisition and charged with various crimes, including the dealing in Navajo slaves which was now illegal. It was revealed by Mendizabal himself that at this time he owned, or had interest in, about ninety Apache (Navajo?) slaves.[22] In early May, the members of the Audiencia or Council in Santa Fe reached a decision on the charges against Governor Mendizabal. They pronounced him guilty of violating the terms of a peace agreement with certain Apaches (Navajo?) who had come to live at the Jemez and Taos Pueblos. According to the charges, Mendizabal had ordered all the males killed and their women and children seized so they could be sold as servants.[23]

Later,a formal trial before the Audiencia in Guadalajara, Mexico took place in 1663. Here a complaint was filed against Mendizabal by Fray Juan Ramirez. Ramirez's complaint stated that:

". . . Lopez (Mendizabal) had previously sent seventy or eighty Apache (Navajo) captives—both men and women—to be sold for slave labor in the mines of the Real de San Jose del Parral in Mexico. In another complaint against the governor, 'His enemies stated that on one occasion, having induced a group of Apache (Navajo) warriors to come to Jemez in peace and friendship, he not only ordered a treacherous attack on them during which fifteen were killed, but also executed a follow-up raid on the camp of the nomads nearby during which ten men and thirty women and children were captured. . . .' "

Lopez also, the complaints stated, had intensified the hostility of the Apaches and Navajos by other acts of treachery.[24]

By the year 1665, a map by Governor Dionisio de Penalosa Briceno y Berdugo showed the Navajos being located in the area of the Lukachukai Mountains near Canyon de Chelly and on Black Mesa north of the Hopi villages, as well as north of the San Francisco Mountains.[25]

In March of 1666, an expedition to punish the Navajos in the Acoma area was led by Juan Dominquez de Mendoza, the Captain General and Lt. Governor of New Mexico. The campaign provided little in the way of relief for the Acoma peoples for in June of that same year, a combined raiding party of Navajos and Apaches again struck the Acoma area. Twelve people were killed, several captured and eight hundred head of sheep as well as horses and cattle were taken. The governor of the Province in an effort to end these raids sent fifty soldiers and six hundred Christian Indians to Jemez to start a campaign against the Navajos.[26]

Campaigns by the Spanish did little to stop the raids, causing Fray Juan Bernal to write in April 1669:

"Of two great calamities in the province of New Mexico. The Navajo and Apache depredations. . .'The whole land is at war with the widespread heathen nation of Apache Indians, who kill all the Christian Indians they can find and encounter. No road is safe; everyone travels at risk of his life, for the heathens traverse them all, being courageous and brave.' "[27]

Also, Bernal reported, the drought was having a severe effect

upon the Province of New Mexico. This drought proved to be one which caused tremendous hardships for both the Navajos and the Spaniards. Nor did the problems end when the rains again fell on the dry soil of the Province, for in 1671, a pestilence occurred which killed both people and cattle. After both of these disastrous events no respite appeared in sight, for the next year the Apaches began to make renewed attacks against the Province.[28]

Navajo raids on the Rio Grande settlement appear to have increased greatly during this period and may mark the beginning of the Navajos' interest in livestock raising, as these raids probably resulted in various types of livestock being run off, especially horses and sheep.[29] One such raid occurred on October 7, 1672, when the "Navajos swept down upon the Zuni village of Háwikuh, killed many of the inhabitants, burned the church, and with a bell beat out the brains of the resident missionary, Fray Pedro de Avila y Ayala while he clung to a cross." As a result of this raid, Háwikuh was never occupied again.[30] However, other sources indicate that Háwikuh was not abandoned until after 1680 and that the priest, Pedro de Avila y Ayala managed to escape with his life.[31]

In September 1675, "Don Juan Dominquez de Mendoza was commissioned by Governor Juan Francisco de Trevino (1675-1677) to lead another campaign against the Navajos across the Cordillera of Navajo (mountainous area) to Casa Furete,[32] and "other places necessary" to punish them and check their marauding.[33] The expedition gathered at the Pueblo of Zia with 40 Spaniards and 300 Pueblo Indians.[34] During the campaign 15 Navajo were killed, 6 Pueblo Indians and a Spanish girl were recovered from captivity, large quantities of Navajo corn were destroyed, and 35 Navajos were captured and brought back as slaves."[35]

Another campaign into Navajo Country was ordered by Governor Antonio Otermin (1677 - 1683) in July, 1678. This new expedition was made up of fifty Spanish soldiers and four hundred Indian allies from Zia. The expedition was directed to move westward to the Navajo areas of Casa Furete and the Rio Grande de Navajo (San Juan River) region. When the campaign was completed, the expedition was to return by way of the Piedra Alumbre, the region where the Rio Puerco of the north and the Rio Chama joined together.[36] The Piedra Alumbre was considered by the Spanish to be the main area where the Navajos met to make plans for both trading and war with the Rio Grande settlements and Pueblos.

As the campaign moved toward its destination, the soldiers

were warned to take all necessary precautions against allowing the Navajos to stampede the horses during the night and kill the Indian allies. The campaign resulted in the taking of fifty prisoners as captives, the freeing of two women who were being held captive and the acquiring of thirteen horses. Navajo fields and houses were destroyed[37] along with some 2500 fanegas of Navajo grain. Also, an ambush that the Navajos had prepared on a mesa had failed and the Dine' had been forced to retreat.

The Navajos refused to be placed on the defensive with their lands continually invaded by the Spanish and a month later, Governor Otermin wrote that the Navajos had retaliated with an attack on the Pueblo of Acoma:

> " *'In order to restrain their insolence, their crimes and atrocities have been punished in the general destruction inflicted upon them by my order, which resulted in in the death of some of them and the capture of others. Nevertheless, adding crimes to crimes, they lay in ambush at the Penon de San Esteban de Acoma where they destroyed the said Pueblo and stronghold.'* "[38]

As a result of this Navajo raid, Dominquez (de Mendoza) was once again instructed to campaign against the Navajos. His instructions stated: to march from the Plaza de Armas of the Pueblo of Sia (Zia) in good order and military discipline to the said cordilleras of the west of Casa Furete, Navajo and Penoles,* and other places which may seem necessary to him. . . . .[39]

The Dominquez campaign was approximately the same size as the previous one and appears to have had little effect upon the Navajos. In the summer of 1779, another campaign against the Dine' was ordered by Governor Otermin. The campaign plans called for the Spanish forces to split into two groups. One group, led by Maestre de Campo Francisco Xavier was to move westward from Taos and eventually join the other force led by Juan Dominquez. This would hopefully form a pincer movement which would trap the Navajos and completely destroy them.[41]

* Volcanic necks and sandstone crowned mesas that dot the valley of the Rio Puerco of the East between Mesa Prieta east of the river to Cebolleta Mountain on the west. El Cabezon is the most prominent of the volcanic necks.[40]

Footnotes

1. J. Lee Correll, *Through White Men's Eyes: A Contribution to Navajo History*, Vol. I, (Window Rock, Arizona: The Navajo Times Publishing Co., 1976), p. 10.
2. Raymond Friday Locke, *The Book of the Navajo* (Los Angeles: Mankind Publishing Co., 1976), p. 165.
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4. Jack D. Forbes, *Apache, Navaho and Spaniard* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), p. 131.
5. Marc Simmons, *New Mexico* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1977), p. 63.
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7. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 136.
10. Correll, *loc. cit.*
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.
12. Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 142.
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15. France V. Scholes, Troublous Times in New Mexico, *New Mexico Historical Review, Vol. XII*, No. 1, (January 1938), p. 150.
16. Reeve, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
17. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
18. Frank McNitt, *Navajo Wars* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1972), p. 17.
19. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
21. Reeve, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
22. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
28. Reeve, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
30. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
31. Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 168.
32. Correll, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.
33. Reeve, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
34. McNitt, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
35. Correll, *loc. cit.*
36. Frank D. Reeve, Early Navaho Geography, *New Mexico Historical Review, Vol. XXXI*, No. 4, (October 1956), p. 295.
37. Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 173.
38. Reeve, *Seventeenth Century Navaho-Spanish Relations*, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.
39. *Ibid.*
40. Reeve, *Early Navaho Geography*, *op. cit.*, p. 304.
41. Reeve, *Seventeenth Century Navaho-Spanish Relations*, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

Chapter 9

THE PROVINCE IN PERIL

By 1680, the problems in the New Mexico Province had pushed the different warring factions to the boiling point. Each was now ready to spill over into the other's domain and destroy them. The Spanish had not been able to achieve their ultimate goal of conquering all the Indian groups, Christianize tnem and use their labor. Not only had they failed to reach this goal, but they themselves were weakened because of their quarrels among themselves. The old break between church and state had improved to some degree, but not all problems were solved or for that matter forgotten.

The Indians, such as the Navajo on the fringe areas of Spanish-held lands were still unconquered, yet campaigns into their territory and the taking of captives for slave labor left them in a continuous hostile state toward the Spaniards.

The Pueblos, those Indian settlements that had suffered first from the hands of the Spanish conquistadores and had since been forced to change their religion and serve their Spanish masters, were the hardest pressed. The church, through the religious fervor of its priests, had tried since their first arrival to stop the old religious practices and native customs of the people. Colonial law forbid all earlier forms of Indian worship, especially the ceremonial dances which were such an important feature of Pueblo religion. The priests had taken severe measures to stamp out all forms of traditional religion, action so severe that it had built up a great and undying desire among the Pueblos to drive the Spaniards out and restore their old ways.

In addition to these problems, the Spaniards control over the New Mexico area seemed to be shrinking. At the beginning of the 1670's, the area of Spanish control had included forty-six pueblos of Christian Indians and the Spanish capital of Santa Fe. During the same decade however, the Navajos and Apaches had forced seven of these forty-six pueblos to be abandoned. Those abandoned were: Háwikuh, in the province of Zuni; the Tompiros Pueblos of Abo, Jumanos and Tavira; the Tewa Pueblos of Chilili, Tajique and Quari.[1]

This contraction of the Spanish frontier area along with the government's internal squabbles and, the most serious of all, the Pueblos' hatred of the Spanish set the stage for disaster in New

Mexico. That disaster came on August 10, 1680 in the form of the Pueblo Revolt. A revolt which succeeded in driving the Spanish out, but eventually led to a reconquest and total subjugation of the Pueblos.

During the revolt by the combined Pueblos of the Rio Grande, three hundred and eighty Spaniards and Mexican-Indians were killed along with twenty-one priests, most of whom died at the missions in the various pueblos. The Spaniards were driven from the lands of New Mexico with Governor Otermin and 1,946 others escaping along the Rio Grande to El Paso del Norte (present-day Juarez, Mexico). By October 1680, only a few Spaniards who had been taken captive remained in New Mexico. Of the 1,946 who managed to escape, at least 500 were Pueblos, Apaches or Navajo servants.[2]

What part the Navajos played in the Pueblo Uprising is somewhat shadowy. It is reasonable to assume that some bands did take advantage of the situation to gain what they could from the unsettled conditions. One such report of Navajo activities came from a man named Shimitihua who was part of a small group of Pueblos who decided to leave the Spanish at El Paso and return to their homes. Shimitihua reported that he had met a Navajo chief at the Pueblo of Santo Domingo who was engaged in negotiating a peace between the two peoples, a peace that had been sought by the Pueblo people.[3]

This report of peace negotiations must not be misunderstood to mean that all bands of the Navajo Nation were friendly to all of the Pueblo peoples. While the Navajos appeared to be on somewhat friendly terms with the Pueblos of the Rio Abajo, they were not always peacefully inclined toward those of the Rio Arriba.[4]

During the period that the New Mexico Province remained free of Spanish control, the Navajos appeared to have remained on fairly peaceful terms with the Pueblo groups. Of course, few records exist about what was happening among the various Indian groups, but it can be assumed that some friction did occur between the Navajos and other Indian groups during this period. One such instance involved the Navajos and the Havasupais or Cosninos, who were under such pressure from the Navajos that they went into the Colorado River gorge to escape. Tree-ring dates of Navajo hogans and other structures indicate that the Navajos settled in the old Havasupai area after they had been driven out.[5]

For twelve years, the Spanish were forced to be exiles at El Paso, but in 1692, Governor Don Diego de Vargas Zapata y Luján Ponce de León (1691-1697) began preparations to retake the Province of

Don Diego de Vargas Zapata y Luján Ponce de León
(Courtesy Museum of New Mexico)

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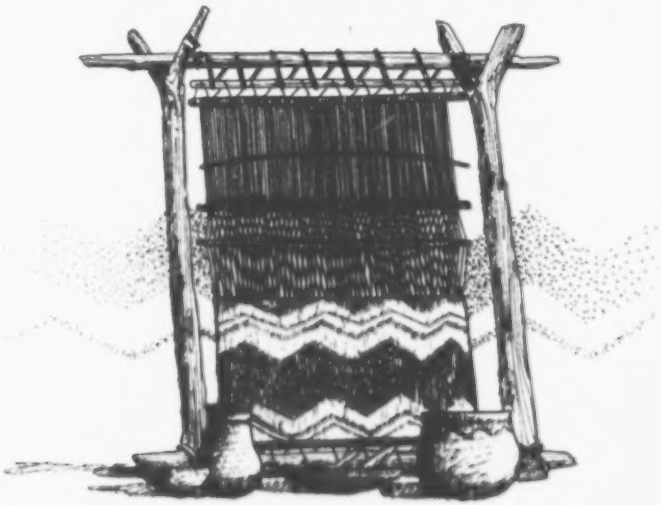
New Mexico from the Indians who had defeated the supposedly invincible Spaniards and had so sorely wounded their pride. Before making a major campaign into the province, de Vargas in 1662 made an initial tour of the area of Pueblo land to determine what the situation was and what obstacles lay in the way of the Spanish reconquest of New Mexico.

After returning to El Paso del Norte, De Vargas began to assemble his expedition which left the following year to reconquer the lost province and take revenge upon the Indians for the smudge they had caused upon the Spanish honor. Two years of hard fighting was necessary, but by 1696, New Mexico was once again under the control of the Spanish. The Pueblos and their Indian allies resisted the Spaniards at every turn, but this time they appeared not to be as united as they had been during the 1680 Uprising and the Spanish reconquest proved successful.[6]

Those Pueblos who refused to yield to Spanish domination abandoned their homes and sought refuge in other pueblos, chose new sites for pueblos such as Laguna, or fled to take refuge among the tribes of the eastern plains or among the Navajos.

Those Pueblos who fled their homes to live among the Navajos took with them the skills of weaving and pottery-making which they taught the Navajos. It is believed that the art of weaving for which the Navajos are so well known today originated with these Pueblos



Rug on loom and pottery samples
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

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who abandoned their own settlements and fled to safety among the Dine'.

In 1699, Pedro Rodriquez Cubero took over the governor's office and one year later was faced with a possible uprising at the Pueblo of Zuni. News of the intended uprising was brought to the Spaniards' attention by four Navajos who reported that, following a hunting trip, they had gone to Zuni to trade the meat they had gotten during the hunt for needed Zuni goods. While there, they heard that the Zunis planned to kill the Spanish priest and his Spanish guards plus three other Spaniards within the pueblo. The Navajos then informed the Spanish authorities at Zia Pueblo of what they had heard and the messenger was sent on to Santa Fe with the same news.

Governor Cubero made an immediate tour of the Zuni Pueblo but decided that it was only a false alarm. The alarm was not false for trouble did break out at Zuni in 1703, when several Spaniards were probably killed. A campaign against the Navajos who were also causing some trouble at this time had to be cancelled because they approached the Spaniards with offers of peace. Abandoning the campaign would certainly be less costly to the Spaniards even if the peace would be only temporary.[7]

De Vargas again took over the governor's office on November 10, 1703. Seven months later he met his death and was replaced by Governor Francisco Cuervo y Valdez (1705-1707). When Cuervo inspected the defenses of the colony, he found it militarily unprepared. The small Santa Fe regiment was seriously lacking in supplies, arms, uniforms and horses. The governor immediately took action and by June 1705, he had the military problem well in hand and was ready to strike a blow against the frontier Indians, including the Navajos, who had been raiding against the Spanish-controlled pueblos. The governor struck first against the Gila Apaches and then, in August and September 1705, he turned his forces toward the Navajos whom he said were as troublesome "as is seen from the continuous wars that they have carried on from the conquest of this kingdom (1598) until the general uprising of the year 1680 and which they continued from the year 1693 until 1705".

These same Navajos, Governor Cuervo stated:

> *'Live from the said frontier (Piedra Lumbre) up to the banks and fields of said Grand River (Rio San Juan). Maintaining themselves by their own labor, they cultivate*

the land with much care. They sow corn, beans, squash, and all sorts of seeds and grains (except barley and wheat), such as chili and other plants (cosas) that they have found in the settlements of the Christian Indians of this kingdom; this not being a new practice among the said Apaches (Navajos) since when they became settled they have practiced the same. They made their blankets of wool and cotton; the one they sow and the other they secure from the flocks of sheep that they raise.*"[8]

Governor Cuervo's 1705 campaign penetrated the province of Navajo. In the battle that followed, the Jemez Indians came to the aid of the Navajos and they took refuge on a high rocky hill? The Spaniards, seeking to teach these troublesome Indians a lesson, destroyed what crops they found and in three battles managed to kill forty to fifty Navajos and took some women captives. The Navajos, not able to stand against the Governor's forces, retreated south to Cebolleta Mountain where they sought safety on the north end.[10]

The Spanish forces attempted to follow the retreating Navajos but the heat of the August weather, coupled with the lack of water, caused great hardships for the Spaniards and their horses. The Navajos remained in the security of Cebolleta Mountain and the Spanish campaign was over for the moment. They withdrew from the Navajo Country by way of Zia Pueblo and rejected all Navajo offers of peace. The Navajos had not been subdued and other campaigns would follow.

The next military expedition into the Navajo's homeland took place in September of that same year. Here again, the Navajos fled to the security of the mountains and the Spaniards were forced to withdraw back to Santa Fe. The Spanish used the same tactics as in their early campaigns, as they could not catch and defeat the Navajos in actual battle, they sought to inflict as much damage as possible by again destroying Navajo crops and hogans, taking women and children as captives and as much livestock as possible. Several Pueblos who had fled to the Navajo area for safety following the Spanish reconquest of New Mexico were also brought back, along with those Pueblos who were captives of the Navajos.[11]

These campaigns by the Spanish were destructive enough to

* It is doubtful that the Navajos grew cotton at this time.

cause the Navajos to ask for peace. Several Navajo headmen or captains, as they were referred to by the Spaniards,[12] including Perlaja, identified by Governor Cuervo as a man of some influence, acted as the peacemaker. Perlaja also brought "a number of women and children they had captured along with livestock they had run off and various trade articles".[13] These trade articles included skins, baskets and other items which the Navajos planned to use for ransoming the Navajo captives held by the Spaniards.

In this instance, the Spanish were also seeking peace. The campaigns against the Navajos were expensive. Military supplies were always in short supply, plus the fact that all the "spoils of war", including the Navajos taken as captives, could not cover the cost of even the past military campaign, little less future ones.

As a result, the two factions entered into a period of uneasy truce which allowed the Navajos to again move freely about in their trading ventures.[14]

It was during this time that the Villa of Albuquerque was established and named for the Duke of Albuquerque. It was also a period of rumored discontent for the Pueblos and Governor Cuervo continued his vigilance over them in order to control any outbreaks of hostility. Also, the Navajo-Spanish truce showed signs of breaking down although in March of 1708, four Navajos had come to Santa Fe to ask that peaceful relations continue.[15]

A new governor, Admiral don Joseph Chacon Medina Salazar y Villasenor, Marques de la Penula (Governor Chacon, 1707-1713) had taken office on August 1, 1707,and he greeted this Navajo delegation by assuring them that the Spaniards also desired peace.

Governor Chacon tried to instill into the minds of the Navajos the idea of a unified political system with a spokesman who could act for all the Navajos. In order to do this, the governor presented a baton which would act as a symbol of authority to the group's spokesman.[16]

This initial action on the part of the Spaniards in trying to get the Navajos to unify with one principal leader was to be tried several times during the course of Navajo-Spanish, Navajo-Mexican and Navajo-American relations. In all cases (excepting modern times), the idea was basically rejected by the Navajos who preferred to remain with the traditional band system, each of which had its own spokesman.

With this traditional band system among the Navajos, it was not surprising that by the end of 1708, the peace had been broken,

supposedly by one of the Navajo groups. In this instance, it is assumed that the Navajo band which broke the peace was from the Province of Navajo and that they attacked the Rio Arriba District, rather than the Cebolleta Navajos being the ones who ended the fragile truce.[17]

The assumption that the Navajos restarted the conflict comes from the fact that in 1709, raids on the Rio Arriba District increased. Frontier settlements were attacked, captives were taken and livestock carried off. Also, on June 8, 1709, a Navajo raiding party attacked the Pueblo of Jemez and ransacked the church there.

The Jemez Pueblo raid was to bring retaliation from the Spaniards in the form of five military expeditions against the Navajos that year. These campaigns succeeded in bringing four years of peace between the two groups, but the underlying problems had not been permanently solved. In 1712, Don Juan Ygnacio Flores Mogollon (1712-1715) took over the governor's office from Chacon.

In an effort to stop any possible outbreaks of hostilities between the Indians and the Spaniards, Governor Mogollon, on December 16, 1712, forbade all trade with the Navajos and Apaches beyond the frontier area which could be guarded. Settlers were now prohibited from going to trade with non-Christian Indians. Penalties for breaking this order included two months imprisonment as well as the loss of any office the lawbreaker might hold.[18]

In October of 1714, a group of fifteen Navajos raided and stole some livestock from the Pueblo of San Ildefonso. After determining that it was the Navajos who had done the raiding, Governor Mogollon dispatched a major expedition against them. The campaign, designed to punish the Navajos and gain peace again if possible, assembled at Jemez with one hundred-fifty Pueblo allies. The campaign had few visible results other than the burning of some Navajo corn fields and the taking of thirty Navajo captives. The Navajos had used the same strategy they usually did against Spanish campaigns into their country, they simply retreated.[19]

The entire episode of the San Ildefonso raid and the subsequent retaliation by the Spaniards is representative of the political situation in the Navajo Country and the Spaniards lack of knowledge concerning these conditions. In general, the Navajos were doing well during this period and were for the most part prosperous, with established agricultural pursuits and ever growing livestock herds, made up of sheep and horses. The old problems still remained however. They were not a unified group, which allowed some to continue raiding

while other bands remained at peace. These raids caused the Spanish, who were not familiar with the situation, to invade Navajo territory, and punish the Navajos in general, including those who sought peace and were not involved in the raids.

Another problem involved the Spaniards' habit of taking Navajo captives for use as servants. These Navajo captives were usually bought by local Spanish settlers either as slaves or for resale to others. The original idea of settling the New Mexico Province to bring Christianity to the Indians, had not been forgotten and still had its effects upon the Indian captives. This was made clear on September 26, 1714, when Governor Mogollon decreed that all non-Christian captives must be baptized.[20] This decree served a twofold purpose, that for which it was intended, bringing the Indians into the Christian faith, and a hidden one which tended to keep the captives from being returned to their own people. Theoretically, in the Spanish minds it was just as wrong to send a Christian Indian back to a non-Christian environment as it was to not convert them whenever possible. Thus once a captive was baptized as the decree had ordered he must be, he had little or no hope of being freed to return to his own tribe.

March of 1714 saw a new outbreak of hostilities between the Navajos and the Spaniards. In that month, a Navajo band again raided the Jemez Pueblo and once more the Spanish retaliated with another military campaign against the Diné. This time the expedition moved up the Chama Valley and then moved south. Led by Roque de Madrid, the Spanish force engaged in several skirmishes with the Navajos, reportedly killing thirty and taking seven captive. The Spaniards destroyed two hundred fanegas of corn and took one hundred and ten sheep which were used to help pay the cost of the campaign.[21]

The expedition had actually been no more successful against the Navajos than others before it and soon returned to Jemez. However, Governor Mogollon sought to be on guard against Navajo raids and in 1715, he stationed a detachment of twenty soldiers at Zuni to protect the people there from the Navajos.[22]

The Navajo situation during the remainder of 1715 remained much the same, but in October of that year, Governor Mogollon became too ill to carry out his duties and appointed Felix Martinez as the acting governor. One year later, in October 1716, Martinez began another campaign against the Navajos. What prompted this latest expedition into Navajo Country is not known, but it is known

that the campaign again left from Jemez Pueblo with some four hundred men, of which forty were soldiers and the remainder militia men and Pueblo allies.

The Martinez expedition encountered the Navajos at Los Penolitos where the Spanish lost no men, but six Indians were killed. After taking two hundred head of sheep, the expedition returned to Jemez.[23]

Footnotes

1. France V. Scholes, Troublous Times in New Mexico, *New Mexico Historical Review, Vol. XIII*, No. 1, (January 1938), p. 78.
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Chapter 10

A HALF CENTURY OF PEACE

The repetitious Spanish campaigns against the Navajo during 1715 and 1716 marked the end of open hostilities between the two groups for almost fifty years. The reasons for this unprecedented long period of peace may have rested with the Navajos themselves.

It is possible that the Dine' were now beginning to feel the increased pressures from a united Ute-Comanche alliance that made the Navajos feel that it was to their advantage to seek peace with the Spanish and to also receive some degree of protection from them. This advantage becomes clearer when the fact that the Utes inhabited the areas north of the Navajos, the Comanches were to the east and the Spanish to the south. Thus the Navajos may have felt surrounded. However, peace with the Spanish would certainly lessen a possibly dangerous situation of being surrounded by enemies.

"The Ute-Comanche pressure against the Navajos may have started as early as 1709 and could have resulted from Comanche retaliation against Navajo raids as well as the fact that the Navajos growing herds of livestock presented a tempting target for both Comanches and Utes".[1]

Whatever the reasons behind the trouble between the Dine' and the Ute-Comanche combination, the Spanish were just as eager for a truce as were the Navajos. The off- and on-again wars between the two were costly in terms of both money and manpower and tended to have an unsettling effect upon trade and progress throughout both the Spanish and Navajo provinces.

This period also marks the beginning of the Navajo's gradual southward movement from the old Province of Navajo or Dinétah. Spanish reports indicate that the Utes and Comanches had become active in and around the Abiquiu area which was one of several gateways to the Navajo Country. This presence of enemies near the traditional Navajo homeland caused many Navajos who chose to stand their ground rather than move southward to move onto the mesa tops and among the mountain cracks which they fortified with stone walls from which they could defend themselves from surprise or heavy attacks. These sites extended from Gobernador and Largo Canyons to the Chacra and Big Bead Mesas.

Gradually between 1707 and 1730, the migrating Navajos moved from about seventy-eight miles of Jemez to within about thirteen miles of the Pueblo. This movement was probably due mainly to the Ute-Comanche alliance.[2]

As the Navajos began to emerge from the isolation of their homeland, they began to actively engage in both trade and war with their Spanish and Indian neighbors. This emergence, generally in the form of raids during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, brought the Diné more livestock which was well worth the destruction the usually fruitless Spanish retaliatory expeditions caused.

It is thought that the Navajos had acquired sheep as early as 1653, with Spanish reports showing both sheep and horses within the possession of the Navajos as early as 1705. Weaving cloth from wool was observed by 1706 and both sheep and horses had become a common part of Navajo life by 1715.[3]

The acquisition of livestock by the Navajos placed them on a new economic and social foundation. As their herds and flocks grew in number, the Diné now became more conscious of the need for protecting their possessions, especially as they grew more and more dependent upon livestock as the basis of their livelihood. Now they could live comfortably with only an occasional raid necessary to replenish their flocks.[4] This growing reliance upon livestock could however also be a burden in some instances, causing many Navajos to disperse and divide into small groups and move year by year to the south and west.[5]

Archaeological evidence tends to support the belief that by the first decade of the eighteenth century the Navajos were living directly north of Mt. Taylor, in the Dinétah area, and ranged across an area between Canyon de Chelly on the west, the New Mexico-Colorado border on the north, the continental divide on the east and the headwaters of Chaco Canyon on the south.[6]

Peace between the Navajos and the Spanish lasted from approximately 1716 to 1818, but the Comanche-Ute problem was to last until the Navajos returned from the Bosque Redondo Reservation at Fort Sumner, New Mexico, in 1868.

Knowledge of the Navajo's way of life during the period of the early eighteenth century can be pieced together from the testimonies of various Spaniards who gave their statements in compliance with an order issued by Governor Joachin Codallos y Rabal, who sought information about past occurences in the New Mexico Province.

Collectively these testimonies and statements are referred to as the "Rabal Manuscript".

In the "Manuscript", statements made by individuals who entered the Navajo Country help to give a somewhat clearer picture of the Navajos as this period emerges.

The "Manuscript" places the Navajo population at between 2,000 and 4,000 with the people appearing to be relatively prosperous. Most observers stated that agriculture seemed to form the basic economic pursuit of the Navajos, with crops such as maize, beans and pumpkins being grown in abundance. Irrigation of crops was not mentioned, with most probably being watered by hand. Farming implements most probably consisted of a digging stick and a wooden hoe with agricultural produce being stored in underground pits.

Sheep and goats appear to have been the most often observed forms of livestock, with a few horses. Also mentioned in connection with sheep ownership is the manufacturing of woven wool blankets which was apparently well known by the year 1706. These blankets served the Navajos not only as articles of both men's and women's clothing, but also as trade items.

Woman wearing a woven blanket.
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

Hunting also proved an important part of the Navajo's life-style. Additional food was provided in this manner as well as providing buckskin which served both as a trade item and as material for men's clothing.[7]

By the year 1730, reports indicated that some Navajos were living within eighteen miles of Laguna and the Spaniards had hopes of converting them to Christianity through the mission located there.[8] This hope is another example of the missionary zeal the Spanish displayed in attempting to bring the Navajo people into the Christian fold. Efforts had been made since the time of Fray Benavides in

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1625 to accomplish this, but now the Spanish missionaries hoped that both the period of peace and the fact that now that the Navajos were relying more heavily upon agriculture and livestock, their conversion to Catholicism would be easier.[9]

The early contacts by Benavides and other missionaries had brought few converts among the Navajos, but now the Navajo's nearness to the Pueblos of Acoma, the new Pueblo of Laguna (1699) and the Jemez Pueblo made it logical that one day the missionaries would become established in the Navajo Country.

More missionary work among the Navajos, especially in the Cebolleta area, came in 1730 as a result of a visit by Bishop Benito Crespo of Durango, Mexico. Bishop Crespo's visit to the Province of New Mexico was made primarily to see if the area was now ready for the Church itself to take over the activities of the Franciscan missionaries. The Franciscans resisted this move and Bishop Crespo reported that with peace in the Province it was possible, now more than ever, for the missionaries to Christianize the Navajos.[10]

The government effectively kept peace within New Mexico as the missionaries worked with the Navajos. Some advances were made for church records between 1731 and 1740 show that the only Indians baptized during that period were Navajos. The Santa Fe government under the leadership of Governor Cruzat y Góngora (1731-1736) also undertook the problem of Navajo captives being sold as slaves to the Pueblos and on December 6, 1732, an order prohibited this practice, with warnings of severe penalties for violations of the decree.[11]

It is often said that the original Conquistadores had come to the New World and subsequently to the New Mexico Province for "God, Gold and Glory". By the early 1740's, the dreams of glory had long since faded, but the missionary field for spreading the word of a Christian God was still wide open. Also, that old lure of great hidden wealth lying somewhere in the shadowy corners of this vast province was still to be found in the minds and the imaginations of many descendants of those gold-seeking Conquistadores. In 1743, this lure again dangled before the eyes of the Spaniards when an Indian named Luis professed to know the location of great deposits of silver. An expedition was soon mounted to the land northwest of the Province of Navajo. The treasure seekers were again doomed to disappointment, with the only lasting result of their search being the supposed naming of the La Plata Mountains (Silver Mountains) which are located in present-day southwestern Colorado.[12]

A Conquistador
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

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While the treasure expedition to seek silver had resulted in failure, the missionaries appeared to be finding some success in their work among the Navajos. Some Navajos had indicated that they wished to become Christians and along with this and the recommendations of Bishop Crespo, it was now decided that four missionaries should be assigned to the new field in the Navajo Province.

In October 1744, the Viceroy in Mexico City instructed the New Mexican Governor, Joachin Codallos y Rabal (1743-1749) to inspect this missionary project. It is interesting to note that government interest in Christianizing the Navajos and making them peaceful was aroused only after Fray Carlo Delgado stated that the Navajo area gave promise of mineral wealth.[13]

Active missionary work in the Navajo Province began in March 1744 when two Franciscan friars, Fray Carlos Delgado and Fray Jose Yrigoyen left Isleta Pueblo for the Navajo Country. The missionaries traveled to Jemez Pueblo where Fray Jose's mission was located. After spending six days at the Jemez Mission, the two friars reported that they had converted more than five thousand Navajos to Christianity, a more than generous exaggeration when it is estimated that this number probably exceeded the entire population of the Navajo Tribe at that time.[14]

It is probable that some Navajos allowed their children to be baptized in exchange for promises of clothing and livestock in the future and a few trinkets which the Navajos accepted in exchange for accepting this strange religion whose theology it is doubtful they understood at this time.

The missionaries expedition seemed to be having excellent results for some Navajo headmen promised to visit Santa Fe. The headmen kept their promise and were presented to Governor Rabal who also promised that he would place the Navajos under the protection of the Spanish crown.[15]

As mentioned earlier, the statement by Fray Carlos about the possibility of mineral wealth in the Navajo Country caused Governor Rabal to begin gathering statements and testimonies in early 1746 from Spaniards who had been into the Navajo area. The results were the "Rabal Manuscript", which gives some information about both the Navajo life-style and the country during that period of time.

In June of that same year, another Franciscan friar traveled from the Holy Ghost Springs (Ojo de Espiritu Santo) area down through Laguna Pueblo to Cebolleta Mountain. Here he delivered three sermons and baptized some children before returning through

Laguna to Acoma.[16]

Also in June of 1746, an official decree from the King of Spain ordered the Viceroy in Mexico City to direct the governor of New Mexico to definitely establish four missions in the Province of Navajo. This order, however, could not be carried out, as the Comanche and Utes suddenly became more warlike, causing the soldiers who normally protected the priests while missions were being established to now help protect the frontier area. In addition to this problem was the promise by the Navajos that they would come to Santa Fe with a Spanish escort in the spring of 1748 to become missionized. This promise, had it been kept,would have served part of the purpose for which the four missions had been planned. The Spanish waited, but the Navajos did not appear.[17]

Pressing government problems such as the establishing of a new pueblo at Sandia and the need for the military to guard against hostile Comanches and Utes caused the promised military escort for the Navajos to be canceled. A spring drought had also descended upon the country making travel difficult and may have given the Spanish authorities the belief that the Navajos, who promised to come to Santa Fe, might come by a different route. Thus if an escort were sent, it stood the chance of missing the Dine'.

When the Navajos failed to come to Santa Fe in the spring of 1748, the missionaries themselves took the situation in hand with suggestions that the Dine' move to the Cebolleta Mountain area to be missionized. As Fray Juan Miguel stated in 1748 or 1749, regarding the promised military escort that was not forthcoming, 'I took the step in compliance with my obligation to seek the said Indians and to bring them to the place opposite of the point of the compass, which is south, of the said Province of Navajo . . .'[18]

It is possible that the Navajos were willing to accept the priest's suggestion to leave the Dinétah area because of the spring drought which was causing them to draw heavily upon their livestock for survival. At any rate, the Navajos did begin migrating toward the Cebolleta Mountain area where they settled among the local Navajos who were already there.[19]

In the fall of 1748, Fernando de Orcazitas, the Captain General of the Navajo People, cordially welcomed Fray Juan Miguel and Fray Juan José Toledo to Cebolleta Canyon.

The two missionaries immediately began their mission work and several Navajo children were baptized the next day with gifts being distributed to both children and adults. Following the religious cere-

mony in which the baptisms took place, a civil ceremony was held. In the civil ceremony, two prominent Navajo headmen were singled out to receive batons which would mark them as official spokesmen for the Navajos. The two newly appointed spokesmen were also told to travel to Santa Fe for official recognition by the governor, who would place the stamp of approval upon their new offices.[20]

At this time, the Navajos were living on the top of Cebolleta Mountain and in adjacent canyons so the site of the new mission was probably near the mouth of Cebolleta Canyon. The mission was located fifteen to eighteen miles north of Laguna where it was believed it would have a greater influence upon the Navajos of the area.[21]

Originally, the mission plans for the Navajos had included four missions to be built in the Province of Navajo along the Rio San Juan. However, the shortage of soldiers who had to be on constant guard in other areas of New Mexico caused this plan to be abandoned because the missions could not be adequately protected. These originally planned mission sites may also have been abandoned because of the accepted theory at that time that there was not an adequate amount of land for farming or water for irrigation purposes.[22]

Because the original four mission plans had to be abandoned along the San Juan River, Fray Juan Miguel proposed that the four missions be built in the Cebolleta area where he had already started one. The Cebolleta Mission had been accepted in the fall of 1748 by the Santa Fe government and by May 1749, Governor Tomás Veles Cachupín (1749-1754) had accepted Fray Juan Miguel's proposal concerning the four missions. The proposal became official in October 1750 when it was accepted by the Viceroy. However, the final approval called for only two missions rather than the original four.

While the mission plans were being accepted, baptisms of Navajos at Cebolleta continued. Unfortunately, friction soon developed between the priests at the mission site. The main points of controversy appeared to be which priest had jurisdiction over the baptism procedures as well as strife over what the official name of the new mission was to be.[23] Along with this inter-missionary squabble were the problems the priests encountered in trying to completely change the Navajo religious beliefs. In general, the Cebolleta Mission did not appear to be off to a very auspicious beginning.

Between 1748 and 1754, the migrations of the majority of the Navajo population ended the classic Dinétah occupation period. Hogan sites attributed to the Navajos who left the Dinetah area during the 1750's and 1760's appear in the south central part of the Navajo Country and are characterized by forked pole and stone hogans, rare pueblistos, defensive locations and pottery differences from those found at old Dinétah sites. These changes show that the Navajos were undergoing a period of transition between the classic Dinetah period and the Navajo culture as it would be known in later periods. These changes probably occurred as a result of defensive, economic and religious reasons.[24]

The Utes and possibly the Comanches appear to have supplied the defensive reasons for the migrations and changes. This theory is backed by a report issued in 1754 by the governor who reported that the Navajos had fled to Cebolleta and Zuni in order to escape the Utes.[25]

The economic reasons may have been the drought mentioned by the Spanish in 1748 which is also confirmed by tree-ring dates. For a people who were becoming more and more dependent upon livestock and agriculture, a drought would have been an economic disaster which would have well warranted a move out of the drought-stricken area.

A report from that time period relates that an Indian who had lived in the Province of Navajo for over a year arrived in Taos with a story about the Navajos losing crops along with the fact that they were at war with the Utes. It also mentions that the Navajos numbered more than two thousand and held many slaves.[26]

The decades of the 1750's and 1760's appears to have been filled with various activities on the part of both the Navajos and Spaniards.

For the Navajos in the Dinétah area, the 1750's also appears to have been unusually dry, causing some to migrate to the Upper Little Colorado drainage area which was not so drought stricken. The early 1750's also marked the end of many of the Navajo's acceptance of Christianity.

Early in 1750, the Navajos at Cebolleta and Encinal revolted against mission life and drove the two friars, Fray Juan Sanz de Lezaun and Fray Manuel Vermejo out. The Navajos said that 'they had been raised like deer', and did not want to be forced to live like the Pueblos. They had, they said, never asked for missionaries to come among them. The revolt against the missionaries may in part

be based on the fact that the Navajos had no desire to change their ways of life, plus the promised gifts of livestock and other items the friars had made to the Navajos if they would bring their children to be baptized, had not been kept. As a result of this revolt, the missions at Encinal and Cebolleta were soon abandoned.[27]

Ute pressure against the Navajos had not ended during this time and in August 1752, Juan Jose Lobato reported to Governor Cachupín that the Utes had attacked the Navajos with great force, causing them to flee to the mesatops. These attacks caused the Navajos to continue their migrations from Dinétah to the Cebolleta area, but they would not accept the mission life even though Governor Cachupín tried to persuade them to move to the now abandoned missions, especially those in the Socorro region on the road to El Paso. These efforts by the governor failed, but several Navajos were baptized into the Christian faith. Baptismal records for the decade between 1754 and 1764 show that an estimated two men, four women, three boys and ten girls received baptism.[28] The greater number of females may reflect the fact that most Navajos in Spanish households were female and in order to keep them from being freed, they were baptized.

The Navajo's abandonment of the mission life and their movement into and west of the Cebolleta area also marked the beginning of Spanish expansion west of the Rio Grande.[29] "Even before 1747, some adventurous pioneers had established the settlements of Abiquiu and Ojo Caliente on the west side of the Rio Grande. Later, in August of that same year the two settlements were raided by the Navajos and Utes, causing the Spanish survivors to flee to safety."[30]

By the year 1766 however, the granting of land by the governor in areas west of the Rio Grande began when a tract of land one league square was granted to Miguel and Santiago Montoya in the upper Rio Puerco Valley. Also in December of that year, a grant in the Mt. Taylor area was made by Governor Cachupín to Felipe Tafoya. These grants were to be carefully measured to insure that they did not infringe upon areas generally used as fields by the Navajos.

The Tafoya Grant was considered safer than other areas because that part of the Navajo Country was relatively peaceful. But, peaceful or not, the governor stipulated that the grant could be settled only as long as the Navajos in the area did not object. The Navajos, the governor warned, were to be well treated in order to win them

over and to keep them from becoming hostile. It was also felt that the area was not being actively used by the Navajos as they generally made their homes on the mesa tops which gave them some measure of safety from Ute attacks.[31]

As further land grants were made in the Mt. Taylor area in the late 1760's, the Santa Fe government generally stipulated that the Navajos must not be injured, disturbed or kept from using their traditional fields or springs, and that all were to be encouraged to join the Christian church[32]

The intrusion of Spanish settlers into the Navajo Country, although generally peaceful, came to an abrupt end in the 1770's. The long period of peace between the Navajos and Spaniards ended as a new period of hostilities broke out between the two groups. Now the settlers in the Rio Puerco area were forced to abandon their homes and seek safety in the Rio Grande Valley area as the Navajos once again regained control of their lands.

Footnotes

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Chapter 11

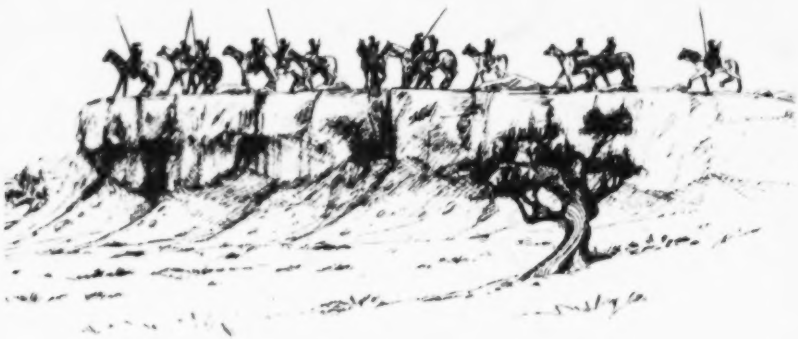
RAIDS AND REVENGE

No major reason for the renewed conflict between the Navajos and Spanish has been brought to light. It may have been simply a combination of many small reasons, including the closer contact between the two as they began striving for the same lands. Also, an alliance between the Navajos and the Apaches in 1772 may have helped cause the Spanish settlers to flee their Rio Puerco settlements.[1]

Not only did the Navajos open the old conflict with the Spaniards, but they also began warring against almost everyone in their vicinity. By the early 1770's, they were at war with the Utes again,[2] with the governor reporting on November 11, 1773 that the Utes had informed him that they were again at war with the Navajos.[3]

The Navajos also began hostilities with the Hopis during this period. This warfare now gave the Spanish renewed hope of being able to gain a foothold in the Hopi Pueblos. For nearly a century, the Hopis had resisted all Spanish advances and had refused to allow the Spaniards any influence within their pueblos. The Navajo assaults against them now made them reverse their earlier policies and seek Spanish protection.[4]

To help end the Navajo pressure on the Spanish, Governor Mendinueta (1767-1778) reported on June 20. 1774 that 'he had



Navajo war party on mesa
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

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encouraged the Utes to attack the Navajos while the Spaniards remained neutral.'[5] This plan to keep the Navajos diverted by encouraging the Utes to war upon them would in theory relieve the Spanish military from having to campaign into Navajo territory and leave the Spanish settlements unprotected. The plan does not appear to have been successful for in August of that same year, 1774, while the militia of the Jurisdiction of Albuquerque was campaigning against the Navajos, about one hundred Comanches staged a raid on the Villa of Albuquerque.[6]

Later in the fall of 1774, two punitive expeditions against the Navajos were carried out with twenty-two Navajos being killed and forty-six men, women and children being taken captive. Spanish losses appear light with four killed and thirty-one wounded.[7]

Retaliatory raids by the Navajos during the remainder of the year took place when they raided two ranches near Laguna Pueblo and the Pueblo itself. Another raid in the area of Zia Pueblo resulted in five persons killed and captives and livestock taken. The Spanish sent another retaliatory campaign into Navajo Country in March 1775 which attacked the Navajos in their mesatop fortress of Yoo' o' Tsoh (Big Bead Mesa) north of Mt. Taylor. The Spaniards were not able to dislodge the Navajos and after a seige of twenty-four hours they withdrew. The Navajos promised to come to Zuni with captives in order to make peace with the Spaniards, but as this was only one band of Navajos, nothing could prevent other bands from continuing their raiding parties into the Spanish frontier.

The entire year of 1775 seems to have been one of continual raids by the Navajos, especially upon the New Mexico pueblos. During the year, Santa Clara Pueblo, Jemez, Zia, San Ildefonso and the district of Abiquiu all felt the stinging raids of the Dine'.[8]

The year 1775 also saw the first of the expeditions by Fray Silvestre Velez de Escalante into the frontier area. Escalante on June 22, 1775 accepted an invitation from some Hopi Indians to visit their pueblos. The Escalante party was well received by the Hopis and following a visit to Walpi on First Mesa and Oraibi, the Spaniards learned that the Navajos in the area planned to attack the party on its return trip to Zuni. The group arrived at its destination on June 6, with no Navajo attack occurring.[9]

By June of 1776, reports began to filter in about Navajo troubles with the Havasupais.[10] Later on July 29, Fray Escalante again left Santa Fe with Fray Francisco Atanasio Dominquez on another expedition into the frontier lands. By August 5, the party had

reached the Rio de Navajo or Rio Grande de Navajo (San Juan River). Escalante wrote that 'this stream is called the Rio Grande de Navajo because it separates the Province of this name from the Yuta (Ute) Nations'. The Utes at this time were probably in the Rio Dolores area of southwestern Colorado and the missionaries crossed the San Juan (Rio Grande de Navajo) near the junction of the San Juan and the Piedra.[11]

The Escalante Party crossed over to the Colorado River and descended into the canyon, using a log stairway built and used by the Navajos upstream from Navajo Creek. The party then visited the Havasupai Indians before moving east to stop at the Hopi villages. Here the party used the Navajo language as a means of communicating with the Hopis. This indicates that the Hopis and Navajos had long been in contact with each other and were familiar with each other's languages. Although this contact had existed over a tremendously long period of time, it also included many periods of war between the two and Escalante reported that a state of war then existed between the Navajos and the Hopis.

By 1779, the problems between the Navajos and Hopis were still in existence, this revealed by the fact that a severe drought which had struck the Hopi area now made many of them appear to be willing to accept Spanish control and be Christianized. This conversion was obstructed by the Navajos whom Governor de Anza reports, told the Hopis that the Spaniards would not receive them. The drought continued and in May, 1780, the Navajos again interfered with Hopi-Spanish relations, this time actually blocking the way of Hopi refugees who were seeking Spanish aid.[12]

The famine and pestilence caused by the Hopi's crop failures and the Navajos effective blockade to keep Hopi refugees from getting Spanish help now caused many of the Hopis to turn to the Dine' for food and refuge. This action caused the Spaniards to fear that the Hopis might eventually join the Navajos and thus end all future hopes of starting missions within the Hopi Country. The effects of the drought upon the Hopis is revealed in the terrible population losses which saw the Hopi Nation reduced from an estimated 7,494 people in 1775 to only 789 in 1780.

The 1800's

The dawning of the Nineteenth Century over the Province of

Don Juan Bautista de Anza

(Courtesy Museum of New Mexico)

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New Mexico seemed to have little effect upon the lives of its inhabitants or to bring peace to this area which had experienced bloodshed as a way of life since earliest times. Some periods of peace had existed earlier, but these generally affected only a few groups at any one given time. Others however continued to attack or remain wary of attack from their neighbors, not an unusual situation in an area as large and diversified as the Province of New Mexico proved to be.

This threatening shadow of war also hung particularly low over the northern regions of New Mexico, the land of the Dine'. Only the slightest spark appeared to be needed to light the fires of warfare that would once again sweep across the land.

This spark, while slow in igniting the open flames of war, came in the early 1800's as a result of Spanish land grants made in the areas the Navajos traditionally considered their own.

As early as 1766, Spaniards had moved into and been granted lands in the Rio Puerco and Cebolleta area. The Navajos had however effectively forced these settlers to withdraw back to the Rio Grande. Now, the granting of lands to Spanish settlers began again. In the first month of the new century, Governor Fernando Chacon issued the Cebolleta, New Mexico Land Grant to thirty Albuquerque residents.

Before allowing the Spanish settlers to move into the "Nuestra Senora de los Dolores de Cebolleta" area, an agreement had been arranged between the Navajos and the territorial government of New Mexico to allow the Spanish to graze their animals in Navajo Territory because of the Spanish need for additional pasture lands. The agreement allowed the Spaniards to use the land only as long as they did not disturb or invade the planted fields of the Navajos.[13]

In time, the Spanish did not hold to the Cebolleta Land Grant agreement and began grazing their animals into the areas restricted for Navajo use. This breaking of the agreement caused the Navajos to take action and they raided the Spanish settlement and stole some of the Spaniards' livestock. The results of this raid was a military campaign against the Navajos in general, rather than an expedition to find and punish only those who were active in the raiding. Governor Chacon took to the field with five hundred men, including soldiers, residents and Pueblo Indian auxiliaries into the Tunicha area where he met with twenty Navajo chiefs.

At this meeting, the Navajos asked for peace which the governor granted only after the Navajos surrendered twenty-eight cows, fifteen blankets, forty-eight hides and one Hopi Indian captive. These items

were to be surrendered as partial payment for the supposed robberies the Navajos had committed earlier.[14]

The Navajos in surrendering the Hopi captive and making the payment in goods, illustrated that they were anxious to avoid war with the Spaniards and promised not to ask the governor for any gifts in the future as a means of keeping the peace as had been done in the past.[15]

By 1801, the Navajos were again at war with the Havasupai and Hopi Indians[16] and in 1804, the conflict over the land grants in the frontier areas resulted in open warfare between the Navajos and the Spanish. These new hostilities again caused some isolated Spanish settlers to abandon their homes and flee to safety,[17] while the Navajos took their stock to an unknown area so that the Spaniards needed information from escaped Navajo captives in order to locate them.[18]

In early 1804, the Navajos had made an effort to obtain Cebolleta by negotiation, but had no success. On February 26, 1804, six Navajos had come to Santa Fe to ask Governor Chacon to let them settle at Cebolleta. The governor refused the petition on the grounds that the land use area was limited and already occupied by thirty Spanish settlers. In actuality, the refusal was probably based upon the Spanish consideration that the area was a land point which the Navajos used to watch over the Rio Grande and from which they left on their raiding parties.[19]

On April 9, the Navajo Chief Segundo traveled to Laguna in an effort to avoid war with the Spanish and after failing there, a delegation was sent to Jemez. Here again the Navajo's peace efforts failed when the Spaniards were not receptive to the Navajo's attempts for peace. These attempts, the Spanish felt, were really a hoax, especially when the Navajos stole ten head of cattle and some horses when they left Jemez.

In that same month, the Navajos broke loose on a series of raids against the Spanish frontier settlements, striking in lightning fashion before it was known they were in the area and disappearing just as quickly.[20]

By May 1804, Governor Chacon had added up the known number of raids, stolen livestock, dead Spaniards and captives taken during the April raids. In his report, the governor stated that the Navajos had carried out raids in various directions and had taken over three thousand sheep, fifty-eight head of cattle, twenty-four horses, killed nine herders in different places and had taken one Cebolleta boy captive. The raiding was taking place in both the Rio Arriba

and Rio Abajo districts[21] and the governor recommended to his superior, Commandant General Nemesio Salcedo, that pardoning the Navajos for these raids would probably bring peace but the Navajos might misunderstand and think the Spaniards were afraid of them and feel that they were superior to the Spanish forces. If this happened, it was feared that once the Spaniards were off guard the Navajos would strike again. With this in mind, Governor Chacon recommended to General Salcedo that within the next month, when all planting was completed, that a continued campaign would be undertaken until the Navajos sued for peace, when, if this occurred, one item in the peace terms would be for the return of as large a portion of all previously stolen property as possible from the Navajos. On June 8, 1804, Commandant General Salcedo agreed to Governor Chacon's recommendations that no peace should be made until the Navajos had been thoroughly chastised.[22]

By mid-July of that year, the proposed campaign against the Navajos was ready to begin. Governor Chacon marched the expedition, which consisted of five hundred men including fifty soldiers and three hundred-seventy-five Ute and Jicarilla Apache auxiliaries, into the Navajo Country.

The expedition resulted in killing four Navajo warriors and one woman. Twenty-two horses were captured and ten captives that were also taken were turned over to the Utes and Jicarillas[23] before the party withdrew from the Navajo Country on July 26. Not satisfied with these results, Governor Chacon sent Lt. Antonio Vargas with six hundred men against the Navajos on July 30, with plans to send yet another expedition if Vargas was not successful.[24]

On August 5, the Navajos retaliated when between nine hundred and one thousand Navajos attacked the Cebolleta settlement where they lost twenty-two warriors with forty-four others being wounded. Spanish losses were relatively light with two killed and five wounded. The Cebolleta settlers were however greatly upset by the raid and immediately petitioned for permission to abandon the settlement and move to a safer area. Before waiting for a reply to their petition however, the Cebolleta settlers had moved to Laguna. Upon learning of the abandonment of Cebolleta, Commandant General Salcedo immediately ordered the settlers to return or lose all their rights to the land. Salcedo also sent thirty soldiers under the command of Lt. Don Nicolas Farin from Nueva Vizcaya, Mexico, to protect the settlers and chastise the Navajos if possible, until other reinforcements could be sent from Sonora, Mexico.[25]

These reinforcements came in the form of Lt. Antonio Narbona, who with two hundred and fifteen men arrived to take up headquarters at Zuni on November 21. From Zuni; Narbona's force was ordered to move on to Laguna where they joined the Alcalde of Laguna and about one hundred Indian auxiliaries.

Although Lt. Farin had already marched into Navajo Country six days earlier, Lt. Narbona attempted to meet up with the Farin party. Failing this, Narbona's expedition found itself facing severe winter weather near Canyon de Chelly. Not able to accomplish more than an attack on a small Navajo rancheria on December 3, Narbona pulled his men back to Laguna. The hopes for a two-pronged attack by Farin and Narbona had ended in total failure. Few things seemed to be going right for the Spaniards at this time. The Cebolleta settlers had still not returned to the settlement and the first campaign against the Navajos had been far less than successful.

Moving his headquarters to Zuni, Lt. Narbona now prepared for a total campaign against the Navajos. This time, there would be no sting of failure for the Spanish. Leading a force of more than three hundred troops, with Opata Indian Auxiliaries and Zuni guides, Lt. Narbona left in January 1805 for Canyon de Chelly.

By January 17, the expedition had reached the edge of this awesome gorge. Descending to the bottom of the canyon, Lt. Narbona soon engaged a group of Navajos in a battle which lasted the remainder of the afternoon. By nightfall, the Navajos had been forced to abandon their position and retreat while the Spaniards prepared to camp for the night on the canyon floor. The morning of January 18 resounded with more sounds of fighting which ended around noon.[26]

Lt. Narbona's January 17th and 18th battles with the Navajos in Canyon de Chelly has left an undocumented mystery about what actually occurred during these two days, especially in regards to what is known as the unsolved legend of "Massacre Cave." According to Navajo legend, during the Spanish invasion of Canyon de Chelly, a large number of Navajo women, children and old men hid themselves in a cave high in the canyon wall. Their hiding place was supposedly revealed by an old woman, who had as a girl been held captive by the Spaniards. The story relates that as the Spanish soldiers moved along the canyon floor, the old woman could not help but shout taunts and insults at them, thus revealing the Navajo's hiding place. The Spaniards, firing their guns from above and below the cave, caused the bullets to ricochet from the sloping walls eventually killing all those who had sought safety there.

While no actual Spanish documents have been located which gives reference to this incident, several facts exist to show that the incident at "Massacre Cave" probably did occur at this time. Physical evidence discovered in the cave shows that a number of people were killed there, plus the documented fact that Lt. Narbona had taken at least ten thousand rounds of ammunition with him on the December 1804-1805 campaign but had used them all, ammunition which could have been used in the endless firing into the cave.[27] Also, records show that ninety Navajo men and twenty-five women were killed, with eighty-four pairs of ears being taken to Santa Fe as proof of the success of the expedition. Six pairs of ears were reportedly lost. These facts, plus that which is taken from Navajo oral tradition, which is generally based upon some aspect of a factual occurrence, strongly indicates that the "Massacre Cave" incident occurred during the January 1805 campaign of Lt. Narbona.

> *I went through Canyon de Chelly stronghold, on which the Navajo have based their hopes of making themselves invincible, from its head to the mouth. Because many people live there and because nature has fortified it with the steep rock of which it is made, that hope is not ill-considered. Although I dislodged them this time, I can do no less than point out to you, as is my duty, and without exaggeration, that if in the future it is necessary to fight there again, a larger force than the one I had will be indispensable. They should take a large supply of ammunitions. I brought more than ten thousand rounds from my province (Sonora) and had to use them all to get out of the canyon.*
>
> *It is wide and there are many planted fields in it, watered by a fairly good river which runs through it. But this does not make it impossible for the enemy Indians to attack from the heights those who march below. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary, in addition to those who fight within, to station two parties on the rims of the canyon to drive off the foe who might lie in ambush, and to be on guard against any eventuality.*[28]

As a result of the Canyon de Chelly campaign, Lt. Narbona brought back three Navajo warriors and thirty women and children as captives. Among these were the headman Segundo and his wife

and two children. Eleven of the captives were given as slaves to members of the expedition and the remainder were to remain in the possession of Lt. Narbona.

Two headmen, regarded by Spaniards as spokesmen for the Navajo, appeared before Lt. Narbona, seeking not only peace but also the release of the captured Segundo and his family. To this plea, Lt. Narbona informed Governor Chacon that:

> *If your Lordship should decide to permit the aforesaid Indian Segundo to go free, you can, if you like, appraise me of your wishes in the Pueblo of El Paso, to which I am withdrawing because I am about out of ammunition and my horses are in very bad shape.*[29]

In April, Cristobal and Vicente appeared before Governor Joaquin Real Alencaster who had replaced Governor Chacon on March 23, 1805 during the midst of the Navajo war, to ask again for peace. The Navajos also asked that the captives, including Segundo's family, be returned and that Josef Antonio Garcia be named interpreter for the Navajo people.

Governor Alencaster informed the Navajos that no decision could be made without the agreement and advice of Commandant General Salcedo. In order to secure the needed information from Salcedo, time was needed. Until he received an answer from General Salcedo, a truce would be granted to the Navajos and they were to meet in twenty-five days time at Jemez for the answer to their requests.

On May 12, 1805, Governor Alencaster made a peace treaty with the Navajos. According to the peace terms, the Navajos were never again to lay claim to the Cebolleta lands; all captives must be surrendered; they must not enter into alliances, trade, or communication with nations unfriendly to the Spaniards; and when the occasion arose, they must make war on them; if any Navajo committed an offense against New Mexicans, the chiefs must turn him over for punishment. The Navajos could trade, raise livestock, plant fields and engage in other businesses. Also, Jose Antonio Garcia was to act as interpreter as the Navajos had requested and he was to live among them.

Segundo and sixteen other captives were exchanged, and the Navajos were informed that any violations of any of these terms would be regarded as a declaration of war against the Spaniards and would lead to their annihilation.[30]

The treaty of 1805 between the Navajos and the Spaniards had, according to the Spanish, effectively settled the Cebolleta Land Grant question. The Spanish had long held that a permanent settlement at Cebolleta could not be maintained as long as the Navajos insisted they had a valid claim to the area. What the Spaniards failed to realize at this time, and even at future dates, was that the agreement to treaty terms by individual Navajo headmen did not necessarily bond all Navajos to these agreements. The Navajos were not a unified nation with selected headmen who could speak for all bands of Navajos.

The Cebolleta Land Grant clause of the treaty did not forbid the Navajos from using lands in the area which were not part of the grant lands. As a result, later treaties between the Navajos and Spanish and Mexicans acknowledged these non-land grant areas to be Navajo Lands. White-owned livestock was excluded from the Navajo Country not only in times of war but also during periods of truce between the two groups.[31]

While the settlement of the land grant area was clear in the minds of the Spanish, it was apparently not clear to many of the Navajos. One of the terms of the 1805 treaty had stated that the Spanish would not interfere with Navajo farming activities.[32] As a result, in October 1805, about forty Navajo families arrived at Cebolleta to harvest the maize crops, even though they had not planted the fields. The Spanish settlers apparently did not interfere with the Navajo crop gatherers, but they did express their objections to Alcalde Jose Manuel Aragon at Laguna. Why, the settlers complained, should they spend long hours and hard labor to plant and tend crops which would be eventually harvested by the Navajos who had done no work?

The Alcalde, in response to the settlers' complaints, expressed the strong opinion once again that the Cebolleta settlement should be abandoned. The maintenance of the settlement had in the past brought great suffering to the settlers, and if the Navajos were to ever ally themselves with the Gila Apaches, the Navajos could wreak vengeance once again on the settlement. If this should happen, the Alcalde warned, those families who lived some distance from the settlement would perish without any hope. The Alcalde's recommendations that the Cebolleta settlement be abandoned went unheeded.[33]

In April 1806, Commandant General Salcedo wrote Governor Alencaster that the Navajo chiefs who visited the Santa Fe area and asked for gifts were not to be given any as had been the custom be-

fore the Treaty of 1805. The Navajo's livelihood, Salcedo stated, was based upon agriculture, livestock raising and the manufacturing of blankets. This the Commandant felt was more than enough to take care of the Navajo's needs. No gifts were to be given. Anyway, General Salcedo concluded, the Navajos were still stealing from the Spaniards and some proof of their quitting this practice should be made before any gifts were given to them.[34]

By the year 1807, the Spaniards felt that the Cebolleta Land Grant question should be settled once and for all. The Navajos still considered the lands to be theirs but Governor Alencaster determined that the settlers' land more than lived up to the conditions on the land grant and he approved the settlers' petition which would give them title to their lands. The Spaniards had effectively taken the land and had legally (in their minds) made an agreement with the Navajos in the terms of the 1805 Treaty for Navajo concession of these lands. Now, the ownership at Nuestra Senora de los Dolores de Cebolleta was, the Spaniards felt, finally settled.[35]

Footnotes

1. Albert H. Schroeder, *Navaho and Apache Relationships West of the Rio Grande*, El Palacio, Vol. 70, (Fall 1963), pp. 10-11.
2. J. Lee Correll, *Through White Men's Eyes: A Contribution to Navajo History*, Vol. I (Window Rock, Arizona: The Navajo Times Publishing Co., 1976), p. 43.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 45-47.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.
13. Frank D. Reeve, "Navaho Foreign Affairs", Part 1, 1795-1846, *New Mexico Historical Review*, (Eleanor B. Adams and John L. Kessell, eds.) Vol. XLVI, Nos. 2-3, (1971), p. 108.
14. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 74.
15. Reeve, *op. cit.*, pp. 108-109.
16. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
17. Norman M. Littell, *Proposed Findings of Fact in Behalf of the Navajo Tribe of Indians In Area of the Overall Navajo Claim*, (Dockett 229), Vol. 1-6 (mimeographed) Vol. 5, (Window Rock, Arizona: The Navajo Tribe, 1967), p. 895.
18. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 112.
19. Reeve, *op. cit.*, p. 109.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

21. Reeve, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-111.
22. Correll, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-77.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 78.
24. Reeve, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-112.
25. Correll, *loc. cit.*
26. Frank McNitt, *Navajo Wars* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1972), pp. 41-43.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.
28. Reeve, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-114.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 115.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118.
31. Littell, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-118.
32. *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, pp. 571-572.
33. Reeve, *op. cit.*, p. 119.
34. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
35. Reeve, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

Chapter 12

THE DELICATE BALANCE

While the Cebolleta land question still caused friction between the Navajos and Spaniards, the Navajos, especially those under the leadership of Segundo, tried to maintain peaceful relations with the Spanish. This was illustrated on October 13, 1807 when Apaches attacked the Pueblo of Zuni. When Governor Alencaster ordered two hundred-fifty Spanish and Indian residents on an expedition against the Apache raiders, Segundo promised to furnish Navajo warriors for the campaign.[1]

Some of the Spanish settlers in the Cebolleta Land Grant area, while now enjoying theoretical legal title to the lands, were not content by the spring of 1808 to remain within the land grant area and moved onto Navajo lands. Complaints as to these activities soon reached Governor Alencaster who instructed the second Alcalde of Albuquerque, Don Lorenzo Gutierrez to investigate. The Alcalde sent Don Bartolome Baca to the area to remove the settlers from the Navajo lands. At the west bank of the Rio Puerco, Baca met with the two Navajo headmen, Segundo and Delgadio. Following this meeting Baca reported that:

> *I listened to the complaint by the said captains and the rest of their people. They showed me a small field which they had planted on the Rio Puerco, a site where they had also planted the year before. Now five residents of the Rio Abajo (lower Rio Grande area) have intruded into the said field . . . (three of them) being present, I summoned them and stated the Navaho complaint. I asked them their motive for using the field with the Navaho. They told me that their lieutenant had given them leave to do so. When I asked them for the said license in writing, they told me that they did not have one, because from time to time he ordered them to withdraw to their lands. Explaining that this land could only be granted by the superior government, and in view of the fact that it has not come to my attention*

that a lieutenant holds authority to do so, I ordered that they should lose what they have planted, and exempted them from punishment for their disobedience in overstepping the boundaries . . . what they had sown was to be divided by the (Navaho) captains among those of their tribe whom they considered most needy.[2]

Don Bartolome Baca then moved on to the Juan Tafoya Canyon where sheepmen were watering their flocks, which was interfering with the Navajos' attempts to irrigate their crops. Again Baca addressed the Spanish intruders and reported:

I ordered the Mayordomos of the said sheep to assemble, and in the presence of Navaho I ordered them not to harm or annoy (the Indians) with ill treatment under the penalty of twelve pesos fine and as many days in jail for the first offense, and for the second, whatever might impose and consider fitting . . .[3]

Baca then ordered the sheepherders to move their flocks to another area. Baca then examined the Canada del Pedro Padilla area, which the Navajos maintained was not within the land grant area. The importance of Canada de Pedro Padilla lay in the fact that it contained a spring which the Navajos used, but was currently being used by the Spaniards. After examining the land grant title, Baca found that the springs lay within the Spanish grant. However, after careful consideration, Baca determined that the area was more useful to the Navajos and proceeded to deliver the lands to them. Later, the governor at Santa Fe decided that the disputed area was to be awarded to neither side, but was to act as a buffer zone between the two and was to be equally used by both.

The New Mexico province now appeared to enter a period of relative peace. The Navajos and the Apaches remained peaceful with only a few skirmishes with the Spanish taking place which acted as a reminder that another war between the two groups was always possible.

On July 29, 1808, a group of Navajos, led by Cristobal, came to Santa Fe where the Indians were well-treated. The governor gave Cristobal some presents and a week later, on August 8, Segundo also visited the governor in Santa Fe. These visits were carried on with a peaceful attitude being maintained by both parties, each careful to

avoid disturbing the delicate truce.

Both the Navajos and the Spanish appeared to be willing to help the other, a fact which was demonstrated in 1809 when four Navajos came to Santa Fe to request the Spanish to let them pass to the Sierra Blanca in order to steal horses from the Faron and Mescalero Apaches. The Spaniards agreed to the Navajo's request, with reports being made on August 29, that the Navajos had succeeded in their "horse stealing" efforts and had returned.[4]

Part of the Spaniards agreeable attitude toward the Navajo "horse stealing" adventure probably stemmed from the fact that the Mescalero Apaches were at war with the Spaniards in Sonora, Mexico. Thus any raid which would in any way cripple the Spaniards' enemies would be welcomed. Also, if the Mescaleros turned against the Spanish in New Mexico, the Navajo would make excellent allies. A report from Antonio Garcia Noriega of Jemez indicates that since the Navajo-Spanish truce, the Navajos had not been on friendly terms with the Mescaleros and would, if the Mescaleros came to Navajo Country, turn on them and present their (Mescalero) heads to the Spanish.[5]

By 1812, the New Mexico province still remained generally peaceful as reported by Pedro Bautista Pino in his report on the southwest which was published in Cadiz, Spain. Pino wrote that the Apaches:

> *Were at peace with the Yutos (Utes), the Navajos and the Comanches which are the three most powerful nations and which have put the province (of Nuevo Mexico) in the greatest danger of being lost . . . the Navajo Nation is twenty five leagues (65 miles) from our frontier, between the Pueblos of Maqui (Hopi) and Suni (Zuni) and the capital (Santa Fe) . . . . . .*[6]

This peace within the province was not to last however, for in 1816 the Navajos began displaying hostile feeling toward both the Comanches and the Mogollon Apaches. Those Navajos farming at Encinal, San Jose and Cubero planned war against the Comanches[7] whose depredations against the Navajos of these areas also caused them to begin making preparations to retreat to Canyon de Chelly for safety.[8]

Involvement of the Spanish in the intertribal conflict came in August of that same year when the Navajos suspected the Spaniards

of helping the Comanches in their recent attacks upon the Diné. On August 20, Salvador, with two other Navajos, arrived at Jemez to inform the Spaniards that the Navajos were saddened and upset by the Comanche raids plus the fact that as the Comanches entered the Navajo Country through Spanish territory, the Spanish were suspected of aiding the Comanches.[9]

The interpreter for the Navajo Nation reported that the Navajos had carried out a campaign against the Mogollon Apaches. On October 18, the Mogollon Apaches retaliated for this raid and struck at the Pueblo of Zuni.[10]

Meanwhile, at Cebolleta, the settlers expected an attack from the Navajos who by September were abandoning their fields and seeking safety at Canyon de Chelly along with their tribesmen. It was also reported to Governor Don Pedro Maria de Allande that:

> *. . . . . although they (the Navajos) leave their lands they do not want the Spaniards to appropriate them and that they will not have security in this unless you (the governor) send them a paper in which you order that no one settle on their lands and that said paper will protect it. Also they ask you that by sure knowledge or other reports it is known that the Comanche are coming, that you send them word by Laguna so that they might be warned and be able to escape.*[11]

The Spanish were at this time trying to keep the truce between themselves and the Navajos alive at all cost and trying to prevent both the Navajos or the Comanches from forming an alliance with the Anglo-Americans to the east.[12]

These efforts for peace were generally effective, with a few raids by the Navajos on sheep camps and isolated ranches. By March of 1818 however, the raids had become more frequent and after a raiding party of both Navajos and Utes stole horses near the Pueblo of Jemez, Governor Allande took action. The raiding party was pursued by the Spanish and scouts were stationed to protect flocks and herds. The governor also sent word to the Alcaldes of Cochiti, Alameda, Albuquerque and Belen to be constantly on the lookout for Navajos who might be intent upon raiding their settlements.[13]

The increase in Navajo raids gave renewed indication that the long truce between the two groups was rapidly drawing to a close. This fact was verified when the Alcalde at Jemez informed the

governor in July 1818 that the Navajo interpreter, Antonio Garcia and eighteen men had met with the Navajos near the Tunicha Mountains. This meeting, between Garcia and the Navajo headman, Joaquin, had resulted in Joaquin informing the Spanish that a general uprising of the Navajos was being planned. The reason for the uprising being that the Navajos were unhappy over Spanish encroachments onto Navajo lands. News also arrived from Zuni that the Navajos had risen up all along the frontier for an attack on the Spanish and Pueblo settlements.[14]

It was at this time that a serious and long lasting split occurred within the Navajo tribe. This split began on July 20, 1818, when the Navajo headman Joaquin arrived at the Pueblo of Jemez with his brother and two nephews. Joaquin told the Alcalde of Jemez that despite his (Joaquin's) attempts to keep the Navajos at peace, the Diné were preparing for war. Because of the Navajo's warlike attitude, and sensing that they could not defeat the Spanish, Joaquin had moved his own people and broke all connections with the tribe. This action was to place Joaquin's small band into the role of being traitors to the main Navajo tribe and subservient to the government at Santa Fe. From this time foreward, Joaquin's small group would be referred to as the Dine' Ana'í or Enemy Navajos.[15]

To show his new loyalty to the Spanish, Joaquin now indicated that he and his men would be available to join and aid any Spanish campaigns against the Navajos. The Dine' Ana'í now became the immediate targets for Navajo war parties, and Joaquin and his people were forced to rely upon protection from the Spaniards. The small band at first settled near Jemez but later moved to the Cebolleta and Laguna areas where they eventually settled.

As the Navajos carried out raids along the Spanish frontier throughout the winter and spring of 1818 and 1819, the Spanish began campaigns into the Navajo country in February and March 1819. These campaigns were not entirely successful,[16] as the Navajo used guerrilla tactics and scattered and fled before the superior Spanish forces.[17]

On August 21, 1818, a treaty with the Navajos was made. This treaty unfortunately was not honored for very long, possibly because the Dine' Ana'i' headman, Joaquin, was appointed as the chief spokesman for all the Navajos. An appointment that in view of Joaquin's recent actions in siding with the Spanish certainly would not have made him acceptable to the majority of the Dine'.

By September 1818, the Spanish had found themselves with

the possibility of having to fight two enemies on two fronts. Rumors of a possible attack on the New Mexico province by Anglos from the east along with Kiowa and Comanche allies, caused Governor Facundo Melgares to seek aid from Mexico. The governor asked Commandant General Alexo García Condé in Durango, Mexico, for two hundred men from Nueva Vizcaya to help defend the province. Governor Melgares was informed that two hundred soldiers were on their way to New Mexico and that the campaign planned against the Navajos should be carried out as planned. The Navajos must be defeated and humbled before they succeeded in overrunning the entire province.[18]

Navajo design
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

As the Navajos continued their forays into the settlements of the New Mexicans, the Alcalde of Albuquerque, Juan de Dios Pena, issued a proclamation to the owners of livestock within his district that all previous warnings to bring their herds from the western frontier had been ignored. Now, he stated, all must obey this order and bring their animals to an area safe from Navajo raids. Anyone who didn't would be fined fifty pesos and sentenced to one month in jail.[19]

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Late in 1818, Governor Melgares launched a campaign against the Navajo Nation. For forty-nine days, he pursued them but the usual strike and retreat tactics of the Navajos plus the severe weather brought little success to the Spanish expedition and on December 18, 1818, the Spaniards withdrew from the Navajo Country.

Warlike conditions continued in the province during the winter and spring of 1819. A second major campaign into the Navajo Country was undertaken in the spring by Governor Melgares who reported that his troops attacked the Navajos at two of the Hopi Pueblos, Tewa and Walpi.[20] This action, the governor hoped, would clearly demonstrate to the reluctant Hopis that the Spanish were quite capable of protecting them and that they would at last accept the Spanish missionaries into their pueblos.[21] Hostilities continued between the two groups until August 21, 1819, when a peace treaty was agreed upon. Governor Melgares acted as representative for the Spanish, while the Navajo peace delegation consisted of Joaquin and Gordo as principal headmen and three lesser headmen or "captains", Vicente, Salvador and Francisco.

In the treaty of 1819, Spain conceded to the Navajo people all

Pueblo design
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

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lands which had previously been used as pastures and recognized Navajo rights to lands used for planting.[22] The treaty also included a provision which allowed the Spanish settlers to graze their herds into Navajo Country at Canyon Largo, the mouth of Chaco Canyon and Bluewater, near present-day Grants, New Mexico. This provision appears to be a contradiction of Spanish intentions as they included one treaty term which required the Navajo headmen to encourage agricultural pursuits and at the same time provided for Spanish livestock to be grazed in parts of the Navajo Country.[23] Whatever private feelings the Navajos had concerning these treaty terms are not known, but they did agree to the treaty and peace once again descended upon the Province of New Mexico.

Footnotes

1. J. Lee Correll, *Through White Men's Eyes: A Contribution to Navajo History*, Vol. 1, (Window Rock, Arizona: The Navajo Times Publishing Co., 1976), p. 86.
2. Frank D. Reeve, "Navaho Foreign Affairs", Part 1, 1795-1846, *New Mexico Historical Review* (Eleanor B. Adams and John L. Kessell, eds.) Vol. XLVI, Nos. 2-3, (1971), p. 112.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Correll, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 88.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
7. Norman M. Littell, *Proposed Findings of Fact in Behalf of the Navajo Tribe of Indians In Area of the Overall Navajo Claim* (Docket 229) Vol. 1-6 (mimeographed) Vol. 3, (Window Rock, Arizona: The Navajo Tribe, 1967), p. 572.
8. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 112.
9. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
10. Donald E. Worcester, "The Navajo During the Spanish Regime", *New Mexico Historical Review, Vol. XXVI*, No. 2, (April 1951), p. 117.
11. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 90-91.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 93-94.
15. Frank McNitt, *Navajo Wars* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1972), pp. 48-49.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50.
17. Littell, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 112.
18. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 94.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
20. Littell, *loc. cit.*
21. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
22. Littell, Vol. 3, *op. cit.*, pp. 272-273.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 613.

Chapter 13

THE MEXICAN PERIOD

For almost two years, the treaty of 1819 brought some semblance of order and peaceful relations between the Navajos and the Spaniards. During this respite from having to be constantly on guard and campaigning into the Navajo Country, Governor Melgares tried to strengthen the defenses of the Province. Rumors still persisted of Anglo-American activity which could, if true, bring the Americans into the Spanish lands of New Mexico. To keep abreast of possible future problems, Melgares sent out patrols to watch the frontier, with one patrol ranging as far as the Yellowstone River.

Holding the province against possible Anglo-American invaders proved to be only one of the problems brought to New Mexico by activities taking place in other parts of the world. In Mexico, the seat of power for the New Mexican Province, revolutionary leaders were challenging the power of Spain in an attempt to create an independent Mexico. As this struggle for freedom continued, the revolutionary government in Mexico adopted the plan of Iguala which declared that all the peoples of New Spain whether Indian, European or Africans were citizens, with the right to hold any position according to their abilities and virtues and that the person and property of all citizens should be respected by the government.

Although these same principles were to be included into the Treaty of Cordova, August 24, 1821, between Spain and Mexico and in the Mexican Declaration of Independence (September 28, 1821), they in no way appeared to extend to the Navajos or other New Mexican Indian groups who refused to be subservient to the Spanish. Of course, the frontier situation in the province of New Mexico was completely different from the more settled central area of Mexico. On the frontier, two completely different ways of life were in conflict with one another, with each side convinced that they were justified in any actions they took against the other.

When the situation in New Mexico is viewed in this light, it is easy to understand the continual raids made by Navajo bands against the Spaniards or their Pueblo allies. It is just as easy to understand the Spanish retaliatory campaigns into Navajo Country.

Thus, the Navajos in 1821 raided again and again into the Rio Grande area only to be followed by the usual Spanish foray into the Navajo-held lands of northwest New Mexico. With the September 28, 1821 Declaration of Independence, the province of New Mexico, including most of the Navajo Country came under Mexico's jurisdiction. Henceforth the non-Indian inhabitants of New Mexico would be referred to as New Mexicans rather than Spanish or Spaniards.

During the early 1800's, the Spanish settlements, including Santa Fe, the capital of the Province of New Mexico, appeared to have changed very little in either style, convenience or way of life

Spanish village (drawing by O. C. Joe)

since the 17th century. Built of adobe and surrounded by ancient cottonwood trees, the buildings formed sleepy little villages which seemed to bask in the warm sunlight of a period of time one hundred years in the past. The Province seemed to invoke little interest from the capital at Mexico City other than the annual caravans which brought hides, blankets and other resources from New Mexico to the markets of New Spain. In return, these same caravans, once or twice a year, brought goods from the outside world to the self-reliant inhabitants who seemed a world away from the more densely settled areas of Mexico.

Little or no manufacturing took place in the Province. Most furniture, clothing, tools and implements were handmade and continued to resemble the style of a century before. Life continued in its self-same cycle, decade after decade. New detachments of soldiers and new governors arrived and departed, but little else tended to change. Even the unpredictable raids of the Navajos and other Indian groups, followed by the retaliatory campaigns of the New Mexicans, seemed to be a predictable part of life in the New Mexico

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Province.

Since the early days of the "Great American Land Grab" by the three great powers of Europe, Spain, England and France, the vast lands of the North American continent had been the scene of continuous colonial conquest and settlement, to the east of the Spanish colonial empire in North America, the French and English fought to control as much of this virgin territory as possible, vying to push each other out of the continent. By the eighteenth century, the areas controlled by each were well established.

To the Spanish colonial empire, the threat by their French and English rivals on the American continent were a real and constant danger. A wilderness buffer zone was deemed a necessity to keep these rivals out and a constant vigilance was felt necessary in order to prevent the plains Indians from being encouraged to attack Spain's New Mexico Province. Especially suspect were the French and their influence over the Comanches.

By the early years of the Nineteenth century, the expansion of the United States of America brought a new and more aggressive threat to the New Mexico area. The Americans were a hardy and vigorous people. They had won their independence from one of the world's most powerful nations, and in a short period of time had pushed ever westward to the Mississippi River. Their purchase of the Louisiana Territory had brought their hazy borders into contact with those of Spain's northern territory.

The first Americans to venture into the New Mexico territory, which was closed to all outside trade with other countries, were the fur trappers.

By the early 1820's, these hardy mountain men were followed by the traders who sought to open up the Santa Fe Trail. Great profits were to be made in New Mexico, whose citizens had been isolated and dependent upon the caravans from Mexico to bring in necessary manufactured goods. Mexico itself was undergoing a revolutionary change and after a few initial bouts with Spanish authorities, when some traders had their goods confiscated and themselves imprisoned, the way was opened for trade with the peoples of New Mexico.

The trade barrier with New Mexico had now been penetrated and, with the independence of Mexico, the American traders became a common sight in Santa Fe. Their caravans became an anticipated event in the lives of the Santa Feans whose hunger for manufactured goods was equalled only by the traders' desire for profits.

It is from these early trappers and traders that we can glean a hazy and oftentimes incomplete description of Mexican and Navajo activities during this period of time.

To this way of life in 1822 and the continual Navajo problems came an American trader and observer, Thomas James. While in Santa Fe, James made many observations of the New Mexican situation, and on one occasion he recorded that a lone Navajo:

> *". . . . crossing the public square in the direction of the Governor's house, and driving before him a fat heifer. He went up to the Governor's door, to whom he sent word that he had a present for him, and was admitted. What followed, I learned from Ortise, an old Alcalde, with whom I boarded during the time of my stay in Santa Fe. As he entered the room of the Governor, the Navajo prostrated himself on his face. The Governor stepped towards him and with a spurring motion of the foot which touched the Indian's head, asked him who he was and what he wanted. The poor Indian arose on his knees and said he was a Navajo, and had come to implore peace for his nation. 'We are tired of war and we want peace.' he said; 'our crops are destroyed, our women and children are starving. Oh! give us peace!' The Governor asked the interpreter what he said, and being told, the Christian replied, 'Tell him I do not want peace, I want war.' With this answer the Indian was dismissed, the Governor keeping his heifer.*
>
> *The poor fellow came to my store, announced his name and nation, and requested me to go among this tribe and trade . . . . that they had horses and mules which they would exchange for powder, lead and tobacco. The Indians are destitute of ammunition and guns, and Spanish laws prohibit all trade with them in these articles. I gave him several plugs of tobacco, a knife and other small articles, and told him when he went back to his country to smoke my tobacco with his chiefs and tell them if any Americans came to their country to treat them like brothers. He went off with a guard as far as the outposts on the route to his country. But I have no doubt he was murdered by the Spaniards long before*

reaching his home . . ." According to James: ". . . The next news that come told of a descent made by the Navajos in great force on the settlements in the south, in which they killed all of every age and condition, burned and destroyed all they could not take away with them, and drove away the sheep, cattle and horses. They came from the south directly towards Santa Fe, sweeping everything before them and leaving the land desolate behind them. They recrossed the Del Norte (Rio Grande) below Santa Fe and passed to the north, laid bare the country around the town of Taos, and then disappeared with all their booty. While this was going on, Malgaris (Governor Melgares) was getting out the militia and putting nearly all the inhabitants under arms, preparatory to an expedition. I was requested to go, but I preferred to be a spectator in such a war. The militia of Santa Fe when on parade beggared all description. Falstaff's company was well-equipped and well-furnished, compared with these troops of Governor Malgaris. Such a gang of tatterdemalions, I never saw before or since. They were of all colors, with all kinds of dresses and every species of arms. Some were bareheaded, others were barebacked–some had hats without rims or crowns, and some wore coats without shirts; others again wore coats without sleeves. Most of them were armed with bows and arrows. A few had guns that looked as if they had been imported by Cortez, while others had iron hoops fastened to the ends of poles, which passed for lances. The doughty Governór, Facundo Malgaris, on foot, in his cloak and chapeau de bras, was reviewing this noble army. He was five feet high, nearly as thick as he was long, . . . In the meantime where was the enemy . . . . the bloodthirsty Navajos? They had returned in safety to their own country with all their plunder, and were even then far beyond the reach of Governor Malgaris' troop of scarecrows . . . .[1]"

Also in March, another American, Jacob Fowler, who was a trapper, wrote in his journal that a New Mexican expedition had left Taos for a campaign against the Navajos. Seven hundred men made up the expedition, which Fowler stated forced the Indians to climb

An old trapper
(drawing by O. C. Joe)

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up a mountain where they rolled rocks down on their pursuers. The Mexicans were forced to retreat before the rolling rocks and managed to capture only " 'one old Indian and some two or three horses that were so poor the Nabeho [sic] could not drive them up the mountains' ".[2] By the first of May the expedition had returned, but in April Governor Melgares issued orders for the first Alcalde in Santa Fe to prepare defenses for expected Navajo raids. The Navajos, the governor warned ". . . .may attempt a cloudy vengeance on the inhabitants of the province". Further orders were sent to the provinces' Alcaldes to assemble fifty men and instructed the people of New Mexico to be prepared to defend themselves.[3]

On May 6, Governor Melgares ordered all Alcaldes to bring their troops to Cebolleta, to begin a campaign against the Navajos.[4]

Because of the independent activities of various Navajo bands throughout much of this period, it is somewhat difficult to pinpoint all the various raids, Mexican campaigns and peace negotiations. While one band might be negotiating peace with the New Mexicans, another would be staging a raid upon another part of the frontier. This situation invariably brought the Mexicans to the point of exasperation in seeking to deal with the Navajos who refused to be lumped together as one united tribe under one leader.

In June of 1822, this unfortunate situation faced by the Mexicans brought about an incident which succeeded in driving the two groups further apart. Reports differ as to what and where the event actually happened, but according to Josiah Gregg, an American, thirteen Navajos who came seeking peace were murdered by the Mexicans at Cochiti Pueblo.

Gregg stated that, ". . . . . On one occasion, a party consisting of several chiefs and warriors of the Navajos assembled at the Pueblo of Cochiti, by invitation of the government, to celebrate a treaty of peace; when the New Mexicans, exasperated no doubt by the remembrance of former outrages, fell upon them unawares and put them all to death . . . ."

Thomas James, another American, recorded the event in greater detail, but placed it as occurring at Jemez Pueblo. According to James;

> *. . . . . sixteen Navajo chiefs came into the town of St. James (Jemez), sixty miles below Santa Fe on the Del Norte (Rio Grande), and requested the commander of the fort to allow them to pass on to the Governor at*

Santa Fe, saying that they had come to make peace. The commander invited them into the fort, smoked with them and made a show of friendship. He had placed a Spaniard on each side of every Indian as they sat and smoked in a circle, and at a signal each Indian was seized by his two Spanish companions and held fast while others despatched them by stabbing each one to the heart. A Spaniard who figured in this butchery showed me his knife, which he said had killed eight of them. Their dead bodies were thrown over the wall of the fort and covered with a little earth in a gully. A few days afterwards five more of the same nation appeared on the bank of the river opposite the town and inquired for their countrymen. The Spaniards told them they had gone on to Santa Fe, invited them to come over the river, and said they should be well-treated. They crossed and were murdered in the same manner as the others. There again appeared three Indians on the opposite bank, inquiring for their chiefs. They were decoyed across, taken into the town under the mask of friendship, and also murdered in cold blood. In a few days two more appeared, but could not be induced to cross; when some Spanish horsemen went down the river to intercept them. Perceiving this movement, they fled and no more embassies came in . . . . . .[5]

Late in September 1822, Governor Melgares sent word to the Alcaldes scattered throughout the New Mexico area that peace negotiations were under way with the Navajos. On October 29, the treaty had been concluded between the Navajos who were represented by two Navajo headmen and one principal leader, with Governor Melgares acting for the new Republic of Mexico. According to the treaty terms, each side promised to forget all past injuries caused by wars and the Navajos were free to trade throughout the Province. All captives were to be returned and if the Navajos chose to be united under one spokesman, the headman Segundo was to be the man that should be chosen.

By February 12, 1823, a formal treaty of peace between the Navajo nation and the Republic of Mexico was completed. The treaty called for the Navajos to return all Spanish and Mexican captives as well as all stolen property. In return, the Mexicans would

also release the Navajos they held as captives. One important but competely unworkable point in the treaty called for the Navajos to be converted to Christianity and resettle themselves in pueblos while the conversion was taking place. The treaty was duly signed for the Navajo tribe by Joaquin. The treaty, while appearing to be the long sought after goal of the New Mexicans, had little chance of success. One small group of Navajos who negotiated the treaty could not in any way speak for the other bands of Navajos, especially in terms of changing religious beliefs, let alone other peace terms which the majority of the tribe knew little or nothing about.

The New Mexicans probably realized these same drawbacks to the treaty, but were willing to gamble for better results with this peace agreement than ones agreed to in the past. The New Mexicans took extra precautions however, just in case the peace agreement was a failure. If the Navajos did not live up to the terms of the treaty, the New Mexicans would put the "war plan" they had all agreed upon into effect.

The plan called for one thousand men to enter the Navajo country to destroy the Dine'. Any captives or goods taken during the campaign would be divided among the members of the expedition.

The treaty was a failure and, by April 1823, raids into the Socorro, Belen areas resulted in the deaths of several New Mexican citizens. The New Mexicans' "War Plan" had been conceived for just such an occurence and it was now time to put the plan into action. Governor Jose Antonio Vizcarra began preparations for the Navajo campaign and on June 18, the governor with fifteen hundred men left Santa Fe to march against the Navajo Nation.[6]

Footnotes

1. Thomas James, *Three Years Among the Indians and Mexicans* (Glorietta, New Mexico: Rio Grande Press, Inc.,), pp. 184-185.

2. J. Lee Correll, *Through White Men's Eyes: A Contribution to Navajo History, Vol. I*, (Window Rock, Arizona: The Navajo Times Publishing Co., 1976), p. 107.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 107-108.

4. Myra Ellen Jenkins and Ward Alan Minge, *Navajo Activities Affecting the Acoma-Laguna Area, 1746-1910.* Indian Claims Commission, Government Exhibit No. 530, Docket No. 299, p. 108.

5. James, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-150.

6. David M. Brugge, The Battle of Washington Pass, 1835, *Events in Navajo History*, No. 9 (Navajo Times, Window Rock, Arizona: April 28, 1966), n. p.

Chapter 14

THE NAVAJO-MEXICAN CONFLICT

Many times before, the New Mexicans had marched bravely out of the capital city of Santa Fe to fight against the Navajos, their high spirits and zeal matched only by their fervent hope that this time, the Dine' would be brought to their knees, a hope that always appeared elusive. Each campaign had brought some results, mostly minor, but in rare instances the Navajos had suffered at the hands of the invaders. These high spirits and renewed hopes rode again with the New Mexicans as they prepared once again to meet their constant foe, the Navajo.

Leaving Santa Fe with the largest military force ever assembled to wage war against the Navajo, Governor Vizcarra led the expedition northwestward to the Chuska Mountains. No records show that the New Mexicans encountered any Navajos on their march into Navajo Country and on July 6, the expedition set up camp somewhere near the present-day Crystal Trading Post.

One hundred fifty men who were no longer fit for service were sent back to Jemez with an escort under the command of Lt. Colonel Don Manuel Armijo. When part of the escort under the leadership of Captain Julian Armijo returned after going only to the Chuska Valley with the disabled men, they encountered a small group of Navajos. The skirmish which followed this encounter is the campaign's first recorded contact with the Dine'. Fourteen Navajos were killed, one girl captured and five horses were taken.

The Navajos were certainly aware of the New Mexican army's presence, even before the skirmish with Armijo's men. From their mountain top retreats and canyon hiding places, they had kept a close watch on the invaders as they penetrated deeper and deeper into the Navajo homeland. Meanwhile, Governor Vizcarra spent almost a week scouting the area around what is believed to be the Red Lake which the governor referred to as Cienega del Penasco, Colorado.

On July 11, the expedition began to move again, traveling south and west before arriving at the mouth of Canyon de Chelly on July 13. Several small clashes with solitary or small groups of Navajos occurred throughout the march toward the Hopi Pueblos, but no

encounter with the main Navajo group was made.

After remaining in the area and sending out various patrols to seek the Navajos, all of which accomplished little except for a few who were killed or taken captive, along with some livestock, Governor Vizcarra moved toward Moencopi Wash and made camp on August 6, above present-day Tonalea, at the "Elephants Feet".

On August 9, the New Mexicans encountered tracks which showed that a large number of sheep and goats had been driven through the area and had been joined by converging tracks of horses and cattle. Believing that these tracks might be those of the herds of Juanico, a principal Navajo headman who had been reported to be moving his livestock from the path of the expedition. Fifty men were sent immediately to follow the animal tracks and discovered a group of Navajos, including Juanico, working their way up to the top of a mesa.

From the mesa top, Juanico called down to the New Mexicans, stating that he wanted to talk with the commander. Governor Vizcarra's reply to Juanico, through the interpreter Miguel Garcia, was short and to the point, "I have come to fight."

The governor attacked, the Navajos withdrew slowly, trying to save what livestock they could. Across rocky and treacherous terrain, the Navajos retreated before the governor's forces. Finally the Navajos managed to make good their escape, losing several men and more than four hundred sheep and goats and eighty-seven head of cattle. The Navajos, it is assumed, managed to save the majority of their livestock, as well as the greater portion of their people. The governor now could do little more than begin his return toward the Hopi villages.

As the expedition began its return, the second and smaller column, under the command of Colonel Don Francisco Salazar was still campaigning against the elusive Navajo. While the governor was engaged in trying to defeat Juanico's band and take the Navajo's livestock, Colonel Salazar was conducting his own campaign nearby. As the main force turned back toward the Hopi Pueblos, Colonel Salazar began moving his troops north toward the San Juan River. Upon reaching the lower part of Monument Valley, Salazar attacked an Indian camp only to realize later that the inhabitants were Paiutes and not Navajos.

Leaving the scene of his mistaken attack, Salazar turned eastward the next day before discovering tracks of livestock, sheep, goats, horses and cattle, that led northward toward the San Juan

River. The Colonel's troops followed the tracks but by nightfall decided to give up the chase and settled into camp somewhere south of the San Juan River. The next morning Salazar turned south again and traveled to what is possibly the vicinity of Rock Point Trading Post. The next day a skirmish developed when a Navajo hogan was discovered and presumably two Navajo girls and one boy were captured. The troops were then fired upon by eight Navajo warriors who were soon forced to retreat before the Mexicans' larger force. The Navajos were not followed and Salazar continued moving until camp was made near what is believed to be Lukachukai Wash.

The next morning Salazar's forces were attacked by the Navajos. Striking from all directions, the Navajos forced Salazar's two hundred-fifty man force to retreat. The next morning, the Navajos struck again. By noon the rout was over, the Navajos withdrew and the Mexicans again began their withdrawal toward the mouth of Canyon de Chelly where they rejoined the main force under Governor Vizcarra.[1]

The Governor's expedition had come into Navajo Country to find the Dine', who had instead found the New Mexicans.

The Navajos' tactics clearly showed that it was wiser to retreat before superior numbers and attack when the odds were more favorable. To the Navajos, there was obviously a time to be brave and a time to be wise. The foolhardy do not live long enough for their bravery to show results, and the Navajos were not a foolhardy people.

By August 24, the retreating New Mexicans had reached the Chuska Valley and after a seventy-four day expedition the governor led his troops back into Santa Fe. The campaign was now over. Its success was not great, but it foretold of larger campaigns which would again enter the land of the Navajos in the years to come and never again would the Navajo Country be a safe stronghold against outside forces. Other wars would be fought and other campaigns would occur, until eventually the lands of the Dine' would be taken from them.

Following the Vizcarra campaign into Navajo Country, the Navajos remained relatively peaceful during the year of 1824. A few minor raids were made upon the New Mexican settlements, but the two groups remained generally at peace with one another. The peaceful situation in the New Mexico province during 1824 had begun with a treaty of peace which was concluded on January 20, 1824 at Jemez Pueblo.

The treaty which was signed by Governor Vizcarra and Francisco Baca for the Mexicans, and Antonio El Pinto* for the Navajos, contained fourteen terms which included:

(1) Navajos to surrender all New Mexican captives and any apostates living with them.

(2) The New Mexicans to return Navajo captives, provided they wish to, since to send back those who had received baptism or intended to was un-Christian.

(3) The point raised in article 2 has been referred to the government in Mexico City.

(4) Claims may be made against the Navajos for robberies committed in violation of the truce asked for at Isleta.

(5) Navajos shall avoid abuse of horses stolen in time of war.

(6) Alcaldes to pursue Navajo marauders and recover property; if Indians rejoin their rancherias, petty captains shall force them to give satisfaction.

(7) If New Mexicans rob Navajos, the Indians shall seek aid of the local authorities; the jefe politico shall order them to grant it, seize the culprits, make them return the stolen goods, and punish them accordingly.

(8) Since these negotiations are undertaken in good faith, the Navajos propose all those stipulations consistent with their way of life acknowledged on previous occasions.

(9) Navajos are free to appoint petty captains in their customary manner; the latter may exact fulfillment of these treaties.

(10) Petty captains are responsible for making the Navajo ranchos said to be on the other side of the Sierra Datil rejoin the tribe, lest all Navajos commit robberies, putting the blame on them.

* Believed to be the son of Antonio El Pinto who was killed by the Apaches in 1793.

(11) Since Chiefs Juanico, El Chato, and Facundo have conspicuously absented themselves from the preliminary discussions, petty captains appointed shall urge them to join in as proof of their peaceful intentions.

(12) Once the Navajos ratify the peace they shall treat well any New Mexican traveling through their country and shall put aside all ill feelings towards their kinsmen who choose to remain with the New Mexicans.

(13) Since the nature of peace is to quiet old grievances originating in time of war, both parties shall be obliged to behave accordingly because of the New Mexicans' generosity in not charging the Navajos with the innumerable robberies they have committed.

(14) In accordance with the New Mexicans' Christian duty they urge the pagan nation to embrace the Holy Faith of their own free will.[2]

In April 1824, Nathaniel Patten, editor of the *Missouri Intelligences*, wrote an article for his paper which he entitled "Nabijos". Patten gives a somewhat hazy placement of the Navajos as residing in an area "between the Spanish settlement of New Mexico and the Pacific Ocean". This placement is of course understandable, for few Americans, and for that matter even the New Mexicans, had any concept of where the western boundary of the Navajo Nation lay. Patton wrote of the Navajos that:

> *. . . . . .their skill in manufacturing, and their excellence in some of the useful and ornamental arts, show a decided superiority of genius over all the other tribes of the Western Continent; even over those whose contiguity to civilization, had afforded them the benefit of its example and instruction. . . .*

Patten put forth the supposition that the Navajos were a completely different nation than the other Indian tribes of the west. He indicated that this belief was based upon the fact that the Navajos art forms and living habits were much different from other tribes. Patten may have been making this comparison between the Navajos

and the plains Indians tribes where marked difference is observable. The knowledge that the Navajos life-style itself had changed over the long contact period with both the Pueblos and Spaniards was unknown to the Missouri editor.

Patten was more correct when he cited the difficulties that existed between the Navajos and New Mexicans. The Navajo's "power and bravery", Patten stated, "are proverbial among the Spaniards, who have experienced more molestations and injury from them than from all the other Indians in their vicinity". The editor went on to state that:

> *They (Navajo) once sent to Santa Fe, a large quantity of silver bullion to be moulded into dollars, which the Spaniards perfidiously converted to their own use. The Spaniards also prohibited the cultivation and manufacture of tobacco among them, with a view to necessitate them to purchase their own for which they demanded an extravagant price. These, together with other causes of dissatisfaction, have for many years occasioned mutual hostilities, in which they usually triumphed over the pusillanimity of the Spaniards, and made a large proportion of their sheep and mules the spoils of war. A young gentlemen, now in this town, accompanied a strong military expedition against them, which defeated them; and obliged them to sue for peace. They killed a chief who wore shoes, fine woolen stockings, smallclothes, connected at the sides by silver buttons instead of a seam; a hunting shirt and a scarlet cloth cap, the folds of which were also secured by silver buttons. These people do not adopt the usual Indian manner of living in villages, but are a nation of comfortable and independent farmers. . . . They have fine flocks of sheep, abundance of mules, and herds of cattle of a superior kind. They cultivate corn, tobacco, and cotton which they manufacture into cloth. They have gardens in which they raise several kinds of esculent vegetables; and have peach orchards, the fruit of which resembles our apricots. Several articles of their woolen manufacture equal the quality of ours. We have seen a coverlet, made by them, the testure of which was excellent, the figures ingenious, and the colors permanent and brilliant. . . . .The Spaniards imitate the manufacture*

of this article, but their imitations are far inferior to the original. They make baskets, and small dishes of osiers, so compactly worked as to hold water without the least leakage. The twigs, before being wrought, are variously colored, and so skillfully put together that the finished vessel presents different figures. Their bridles are made of tanned leather, and often embellished with silver ornaments. They dress almost wholly in their own fabrics. The men dress in smallclothes, sometimes of deerskin, tanned and handsomely colored. The women wear a loose black robe, ornamented around the bottom with a red border, which is sometimes figured; and when not engaged they use a large shawl of the same color and material. Their different modes of putting up the hair, show whether they are single, married or matrons. The weapons of this interesting nation are the lance, bow and arrow; which they use with dexterity. These advantages and improvements among the uncivilized, if they may be so called, will no doubt astonish many but the characters of those, who have given us the informations are so far above suspicion, that we should feel little reluctance in vouching for the truth of every fact . . . . . .

"Nabijos," Missouri Intelligences, April 3, 1824.

Peace between the Navajos and the New Mexicans seemed to allow the province to settle into some semblance of order, but an unhappy situation was occurring among the Navajos themselves. While they had never appeared to outsiders as one unified group, they were in actuality irrevocably tied together through language, customs and traditional background into bands which could always be relied upon to help each other in times of drought, famine or war. Now a division was developing which could not be repaired. Since 1818 when Joaquin and his group, which became known as the Dine' Ana'í, had split with the Navajo Nation, the division between the two groups had grown until by 1825 there appeared to be no hopes of a reconciliation. The Dine' Ana'í henceforth would work with the Mexican government at Santa Fe against their brethern, the Navajo, thus earning the title by which they were known, the Dine' Ana'í, the Enemy Navajo.

By 1825, the year of peace with the Navajos was rapidly coming

to an end. Raiding parties were once again slipping into the New Mexican settlements and clashes between the Navajos and the Dine' Ana'i' had become a frequent occurrence.

These raids and the Diné Ana'is occasional appearance in Santa Fe with Navajo prisoners acted as a grim reminder to Governor Vizcarra that his massive campaign against the Navajos two years before had been less than successful. With this in mind, Vizcarra informed the Commandant General in Durango, Mexico, that he would again campaign against the Navajo Nation.

On March 9, 1825, the governor with the Santa Fe garrison left to enter the Navajo Country. Using reinforcements from the province's militia, the governor sought out the Diné. Unwilling to undertake as extensive a campaign as the one in 1823, Vizcarra refrained from traveling deep into the Navajo's domain, but failed to find the Navajos in the area where he had been told a large group could be found. Before returning to Santa Fe, however, he was informed by the Dine' Ana'i that a number of Navajos could be found around Abiquiu. Word of the Navajos in the Abiquiu vicinity was sent to the political governor of the province, Bartolome' Baca. The Navajos were soon attacked by the Alcalde of Abiquiu, who with his forces managed to capture forty-one Navajo men and women. Information as to the whereabouts of another Navajo group was forced from the Navajo captives and following a hasty pursuit of this group, another twenty prisoners were taken and eleven others killed.

The fate of the Navajo captives was without question, they would become the slaves of the New Mexicans. Theoretically, the use of Indians as slaves was illegal under Mexican rule, just as it had been under Spanish rule. In reality though, Indian captives in the New Mexico province were usually sold into slavery and ended up as servants in the homes of private citizens or church authorities. The method of circumventing the illegality of forcibly keeping Indians as servants was through baptism into the Christian faith. Once converted, it was considered a necessary act of kindness to keep Indian servants rather than return them to a non-Christian society. In most instances, these Indian captives were probably baptized with little or no understanding of the new religion being forced upon them.

Usually the matter of Indian captives and their incorporation in the Mexican settlements as slaves was conducted in the half-light of secrecy, with the term half-light being used to indicate that although illegal,the dealing in slaves was generally considered to be an accepted way of life in New Mexico.

Before his March campaign against the Navajos, Governor Vizcarra intentionally or unintentionally brought the slave dealings of the province into the open. Faced with a growing number of Navajo captives, the governor informed his superior in Durango, Mexico, that "if during the expedition which I am going to undertake, some more prisoners are captured,I will take them all with me when I leave this territory so that they may be placed at Veracruz or another presidio, because I believe that little would be gained by giving them their freedom here. And if the other members of their nation see them disappear, it may serve to stimulate (peace) and they will do no evil?[3]"

The governor's condoning of an officially illegal system now led to the understanding by the average New Mexican citizen that Indian slavery in the province would not be considered in the future to be a punishable crime. Now slave traders who sent slave gathering expeditions into the Navajo Country would do so with greater frequency and less secrecy, as they had done in the past.

Footnotes

1. Frank McNitt, *Navajo Wars* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1972), pp. 57-64.

2. Frank D. Reeve, Navaho Foreign Affairs, Part 1, 1795-1846, *New Mexico Historical Review*, (Eleanor B. Adams and John L. Kessell, eds.) Vol. XLVI, Nos. 2-3, (1971) pp. 244-245.

3. McNitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-68.

Chapter 15

THE CONTINUING CYCLE

In 1825, Governor Vizcarra, the military governor and Bartolome Baca, the political governor of the New Mexico Province were replaced by Lt. Colonel Antonio Narbona. The new governor who was to assume control of both the military and political duties of head official of the Province also had to assume the continuing Navajo problem.

In facing the Navajo problem, Governor Narbona tended to follow the patterns set by the predecessors who had held that difficult rein of control and sat in that hard chair of authority in the Governor's Palace in Santa Fe.

One of Governor Narbona's first actions was to continue on friendly terms with the Dine' Ana'i by recognizing Francisco Baca as that group's leader. By retaining the Dine' Ana'i as allies and recognizing Baca as their leader, Narbona hoped to continue using the small band as both spies and raiders against the Navajo Nation. The fate of Joaquin, the leader who had led the Dine' Ana'i in its break with the Navajo Tribe is not known. Baca however, a halfbreed of Navajo-Spanish parentage, contented himself with continuing the small band of defectors' alliance with the Santa Fe government.

Navajo raids into the New Mexican settlements continued during this period until Mexican pressure forced the Dine' to request peace in 1829. While the Mexicans were experiencing these raids by the main Navajo Nation, the small Dine' Ana'i band was itself experiencing difficulties with an internal squabble between Francisco Baca and a man known initially as Cebolla. The squabble itself over some stolen horses was of minor importance to almost all except the two men involved. It does however introduce a man later known as Cebolla Sandoval or just Sandoval, who was to play an important and oftentimes vile role in the drama of Navajo history.

The dawning of the decade of the 1830's seemed to foretell the continuation of Navajo raids and New Mexican counter offenses. On October 1, 1830, a detachment of New Mexican troops stationed at Socorro became the victims of a Navajo raiding party. The troop's horses were stolen and they were unable to give chase because they

were now afoot.[1]

The fury of the New Mexican governor over the stolen Socorro horses was released upon the Navajo chief Narbona and the Dine' Ana'í leader Francisco Baca when they visited Santa Fe with twenty-five warriors on October 12. The Navajos denied any knowledge of what had happened at Socorro. Whether this was true or not is not known, but by October 26, a Navajo chief, Jose Caballero came to Santa Fe to report to the governor that some of the stolen horses had been recovered from the Navajos at Tunicha. Unfortunately, the Navajo headman reported, all the stolen mounts could not be returned as six had somehow gotten lost and three had died. The Navajos though had now made an effort to keep peace with the New Mexicans.[2]

By 1833, the New Mexicans were again clamoring for an extension of land into the Indian provinces. These land grants would once again create discord between the Navajos and the New Mexican settlers and would once more involve the province in the interminable raids and retaliatory campaigns which had marked the history of New Mexico for the past two hundred years.

One land grant was given to about eighty residents of Taos, Rico, Colorado, and Abiquiu for a colony to be started on the Conejos River in present-day southwestern Colorado. The Navajos effectively prevented the colony from becoming permanent by continually harassing the settlers until they gave up and retreated from the area.[3]

Another grant was also made in 1833 for lands at Cubero, an area well known to the New Mexicans. The Cubero Grant was made by Governor Francisco Sarracino to Juan Chavez and sixty-one settlers from the Villa of Albuquerque. Here the new settlers established a settlement on a rocky elevation a few miles across Mt. Taylor's northeast slopes from Cebolleta. The new settlement of Cubero lay within the area where the Dine' Ana'í had settled around 1821.

The Dine' Ana'í leader, now in his days of waning power among his small band, relinquished his own lands to the new settlers and after a year or two it was reported that he had moved his family far away to "parts unknown".[4]

Except for a punitive Mexican Campaign into the area around present-day Crownpoint, New Mexico in March 1833, about which little recorded information is known, the province remained in much the same state that it always had. A meteoric shower is also reported

Meteor shower over mesa
(oil painting by O. C. Jos)

to have supplied a spectacular display of "shooting stars" to Navajos and other New Mexico spectators during the closing months of 1833. Also, the fact that the Navajos were at least making an attempt to help keep the peace is seen by the efforts made by the headmen Narbona, Francisco Baca and Cebolla (Sandoval) to return stolen livestock to the Jemez Pueblo. This combined action by Narbona, from the Navajo Nation, Francisco Baca and Cebolla (Sandoval) of the Dine' Ana'I tends to indicate that while a split was occurring between the two groups, they were still working together to some extent.[5]

The efforts of these headmen seemed to have little effect upon some Navajo bands and the raids continued, especially those following Mexican slave raids against the Navajos. Thus, the nightmarish cycle of Mexican slave raids, which brought Navajo reprisal raids, that in turn brought Mexican military campaigns into Navajo Country, seemed to have no beginning and for the moment, no hopes for an end.

This cycle which had been going on decade after decade continued into the year 1834. As of yet, the Navajos had done little more than skirmish with the various Spanish and later Mexican expeditions that had entered the Navajo Country.

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Not being united into one large group, the Diné were generally forced to try lightning strikes against the invaders and then retreat into the fastness of the canyon and mesa lands of their province. The year 1835 however was to prove different. Late in October 1834, a military expedition under the command of Captain Blas de Hinojos, the commandant general of the territory, had entered the Navajo Country and had remained there for almost a month. By Mexican standards, the expedition had been quite successful. The Mexicans had managed to kill sixteen Navajos and capture three people who were forced into slavery. A large amount of Navajo livestock was also taken, including some horses, mules, and three thousand head of sheep.[6]

Captain Hinojos' campaign did little to stop the Navajo raids and the first month of 1835 saw more Navajo raids occurring, especially at Jemez and Zia Pueblos, where, on January 14, sixty-four head of stock were driven off. These continual Navajo raids, plus the possible fact that reports had reached the Mexicans that the Utes and the Navajos were again on friendly terms, now spurred the Mexicans into preparing a new campaign against the Diné.

The new expedition was to again be under the command of Captain Hinojos, who had, at least in the Mexican's minds, been successful in the last Navajo campaign.

The expedition, made up of about one thousand men, including mostly volunteer citizens and Pueblo warriors, left Santa Fe on February 8, 1835. Twenty days later the expedition, which had been broken into three divisions, had reached the bottom of what was to be known later as Washington Pass. Because the majority of the men in the campaign were citizen volunteers rather than trained, disciplined and seasoned veterans of warfare, the march into the mountain pass was less than orderly. As the Mexicans moved upward into the pass, their minds were probably on many other things rather than an immediate confrontation with Navajo warriors. But, a confrontation was waiting for them and as they struggled through the narrow pass, the Navajos struck. Having waited patiently for the Mexicans to arrive, the Navajos undoubtedly enjoyed the military advantage they held.

The ambush was completely unsuspected and no record is known which tells of how many dead and wounded Mexican soldiers fell in that first flurry of Navajo vengeance against these invaders into their lands.

Mexican reports indicated that thirty-five Navajo warriors fell

before the Mexican's guns. To the Navajos, a loss of thirty-five warriors under other circumstances would have been considered a crippling blow to their fighting forces. At Washington Pass however, their united efforts and the complete surprise by which they caught the Mexican invaders, left only the sweet smell of victory which would long linger in the legends of the Dine'.

Josiah Gregg recorded one version of this story of the Washington Pass ambush, stating:

> *"The valiant corps, utterly unconscious of the reception that awaited them, soon came jogging along in scattered groups, indulging in every kind of boisterous mirth; when the war-whoop, loud and shrill, followed by several shots, threw them all into a state of speechless consternation. Some tumbled off their horses with fright, others fired their muskets at random; a terrific panic had seized everybody . . . . . "*[7]

The Navajos had at last scored what they would long remember as a victory over their Mexican enemies. The ill-fated expedition returned to Santa Fe on March 13, with what they claimed to be four Navajo captives, one hundred- nine head of cattle and over six thousand sheep.[8]

Following their victory at Washington Pass, and despite their losses, the Navajos immediately began more retaliatory raids against the New Mexican settlements. Striking into the Rio Abajo, the Navajo on March 10, 1835, raided the Albuquerque area and June 5, the settlement of Lemitar. At Lemitar, the Navajos took two thousand head of sheep and goats, killed one Mexican and wounded two others. Between June 5 and 7, an estimated two hundred Navajos struck the Socorro settlement at about 6 o'clock in the morning. After driving off the settlement's horses, cattle, and sheep, the Navajo warriors moved to the Magdalena, New Mexico area where they prepared a feast, using some of their newly acquired animals. As the Mexican pursuers arrived, the smell of roasting meat assailed their nostrils. Incensed as they must have been, the pursuers made no attempt to attack the larger Navajo force and were forced to retreat.[9]

By July 1835, some of the more conservative Navajo headmen, including Narbona, were ready to again approach the Santa Fe government in search of peace. The new governor, Colonel Albino

Perez agreed for a peace council to take place at San Miguel de Jemez, which was located within the Navajo Country.[10] Governor Perez however was unwilling to take any chances, and was prepared to arrive at the conference ready to make "war or peace". The Governor therefore called upon the Alcaldes of Santa Fe, Abiquiu, Cochiti, Jemez, Laguna, Tome, Sandia, Albuquerque, Isleta, Valencia, Belen, Sabinah San Ildefonso, Canada, Santa Clara and San Juan to furnish six hundred and five men from their districts.[11] Backed with this force, the Mexicans negotiated with the Navajos. What agreement was reached between the two groups is not known, but it is felt that some plan for the mutual exchange of captives was made.[12]

One year later, in July 1836, another Mexican campaign against the Navajos took place. However, this volunteer expedition led by Jose Francisco Vigil was not given free rein to war against all the Navajos. Vigil was instructed by the government that certain Navajo headmen, including Narbona, Sandoval, Jose Tapia, Caballada Mucha and El Negrito, were at peace with the citizens of New Mexico. They had, the government stated, come to Zuni to cooperate with the governor in order to punish those Navajos who continued to raid the settlements. These men and their rancherias, the government instructed, were to be left alone and protected by the Mexicans.[13]

Little is known of the outcome of the Vigil expedition, but it could have served little more than a preliminary notice of larger and more powerful campaigns to come. By September 1836, Governor Perez was ready to mount another and more forceful campaign into the homeland of the Navajos. On September 9, the largest force ever to wage war against the Navajo Nation took to the field. The two thousand man expedition arranged by Governor Perez was divided into three divisions under the command of Lts. Jose Caballero, Francisco Garcia and Jose Siva. Marching into the Zuni area, the Mexican forces were met with an unexpected blast of exceptionally cold weather. Within a week the campaign was over. The Mexicans had suffered from the intensely bitter weather and had managed to take a large quantity of Navajo livestock and kill nineteen warriors and one woman. Only one Navajo captive was reported to have been taken and other than the death of Lt. Garcia, who died of the cold, no Mexican casualties are known.

Navajo raids continued unabated despite the campaign, causing Governor Perez to prepare another Navajo campaign despite the cold weather that seemed to hold the New Mexico province within its icy grip.

The new campaign was to be headed by the governor himself and on December 9, Governor Perez led his force of sixty soldiers and seven hundred-fifty Pueblo and civilian auxiliaries against the Navajo Nation. Advancing to Cubero, the governor gathered his forces and on December 16, 1836, the expedition was ready for action. Marching to Zuni Pueblo where he planned to punish the Zunis for what had been a rumored alliance with the Navajos, Governor Perez's forces continually battled the inclement winter weather.

At Zuni Pueblo, the inhabitants convinced Perez that they were not allies of the Navajo and were in fact at war with them, backing up their claims by delivering two Navajo captives to the Mexicans who promptly shot them. From Zuni, the Mexican forces marched into the eastern foothills of the Chuska Mountains. The Navajos, using their age-old, tried and true methods when faced by superior numbers, retreated before the Mexican expedition. Following fresh tracks left in the snow, a three hundred man force under the leadership of Ensign Diego Saenz followed the largest trail of tracks as they led into the mountains.

A week later, the Saenz's small force reunited with Perez at Ojo del Carrizo. Two thousand head of sheep and eighteen horses and mules had been taken from three Navajo rancherias, with eight Navajo warriors killed and two women and a child taken captive. The entire results of this unusual winter campaign amounted to little but the foot weariness of the Mexican troops and many cases of frostbitten feet and hands.

The Navajos, however, had received a punishing blow, not in the number of men killed or animals taken, but in the fact that their winter quarters had been disturbed. Always in the past, with the exception of Lt. Antonio Narbona in the winter campaign of 1804-1805, the Navajos had been safe during the winter season. Spanish and Mexican campaigns against the Dine' had generally been held during the warmer seasons. The winter campaign of 1836 could only act as a chilling forecast of other campaigns to come, including that of Kit Carson a quarter of a century later which would destroy the power of the Dine' and send them into exile far from their homeland.

Footnotes

1. J. Lee Correll, *Through White Men's Eyes: A Contribution to Navajo History, Vol. 1,* (Window Rock, Arizona: The Navajo Times Publishing Co., 1976), pp. 129-130.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 130-131.
4. Frank McNitt, *Navajo Wars* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1972), p. 72.
5. Correll, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-132.
6. McNitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-73.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 74.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 383.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
10. McNitt, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
11. Correll, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-136.
12. McNitt, *loc. cit.*
13. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

Chapter 16

THE END OF THE MEXICAN PERIOD

In 1837, Governor Perez was assassinated and was replaced by Manuel Armijo. The new governor in 1838 sent out another campaign against the Navajos because of their continued depredations against the Mexican settlements. By 1839, the Navajos had again requested peace with the Santa Fe government. At first, Governor Armijo refused to consider this request, but later changed his mind and on July 15, 1839, announced that a treaty of peace between the Navajo Nation and the Mexican Province of New Mexico had been concluded at Jemez.

The treaty contained the usual terms of promising lasting peace and good will, plus agreements for trading within the province. The more important terms of the treaty dealt with the problems of the captives held by both sides. Over the question of captives, Governor Armijo drove a hard bargain. Mexican captives who were held by the Navajos were to be returned, but Navajo captives in Mexican hands were to be regarded as justifiable "spoils of war" and were not to be released. Also, the question of punishment for either Navajos or Mexicans who committed murder against each other was resolved, at least to the satisfaction of the Mexicans. Under this one-sided term in the treaty, any Mexican who killed a Navajo had only to pay thirty sheep to the dead man's family and then face punishment under Mexican law. A law which in all probability would not punish a Mexican for killing a Navajo who was generally considered as enemy anyway.

The Navajo who murdered a Mexican citizen, however, was to be turned over to Mexican authorities for punishment. This punishment in most instances would probably result in the Navajo's death by hanging. Under such an agreement, the hopes of any lasting peace between the two groups was doomed from the start. The Navajos would not under any circumstances live up to this agreement and although the same agreement appears again and again in later treaties, no compliance with this term was made by the Navajos.[1]

The treaty terms could not be complied with by the Navajos and headmen could not keep all the Navajo Nation at peace. Raiding

Manuel Armijo
(Courtesy Museum of New Mexico)

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continued only to be followed by Mexican campaigns designed to punish the Dine' and hopefully to break their power, force them to their knees and bring them submissively under total Mexican control.

For nearly two years a semi-state of armistice existed between the Navajos and their Mexican enemies. Various Navajo headmen during this period worked to keep the delicate truce alive. Problems continually arose however, and the questions concerning the release of captives seemed to be unanswerable.

Rumors of Navajo mischief and a possible split within the ranks of the Navajo Nation persisted while the almost endless cycle of peace and aggression continued.

By March 1844, new peace negotiations were under way at Santo Domingo. It is not certain which Navajo headmen signed the March 18 Peace Treaty but possibly those same Navajo leaders who had appealed for peace were present. These included Narbona, El Guero, Cabras Muchas, Juan Chaves and Archuleta. No mention was made in these negotations of Zarcillos Largos, Armijo or the Dine' Ana'i leader, Sandoval.

The Santo Domingo Treaty differed little from previous ones, with the exception of terms concerning the return of captives. Once again the Navajos were to return all Mexican captives, but the Navajo captives would not be returned. Instead, the Navajos could buy the freedom of their own people by paying a ransom for them.

The treaty again proved to be a failure and the New Mexico Province once more entered into a state of undeclared warfare. Raiding by the Navajos continued with the Mexicans being held almost hopelessly entangled in a cloud of uncertainty. The Dine' Ana'i were willing to help the Mexicans against the Navajo Nation, but a serious situation had arisen between the Republic of Mexico and the expansion-minded United States of America.

War between the two neighboring countries now appeared imminent as the question of the southwestern border of Texas remained unsolved. Government authorities in Santa Fe now awaited the outcome of this threat from the east. No campaigns against the Dine' could now be made. All soldiers and civilians would now be needed to stop any invasion by United States forces should war occur.

By May 1846, war between the two nations had become a reality and the poorly defended Province of New Mexico awaited the invasion by American troops. The wait was not long and in August 1846, Stephen Watts Kearny's Army of the West marched

into Santa Fe and declared control over both the Province's citizens and its Indian tribes.

The declaration of control by the Americans sounded a fateful warning for the Navajo Nation, secure in its traditional homeland. The Americans, or the "New Men" as the Navajos called them, had used the term "control", the same thing the Spanish and Mexicans had been seeking for almost two centuries. Now however, the power and resources of the United States would put more meaning into the term, and within a short time, the world of the Navajo would begin to collapse. The strength, daring and endurance of the Dine' would now be forced to face its greatest challenge.

Footnotes

1. Frank McNitt, *Navajo Wars (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1972)*, pp. 79-81.

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